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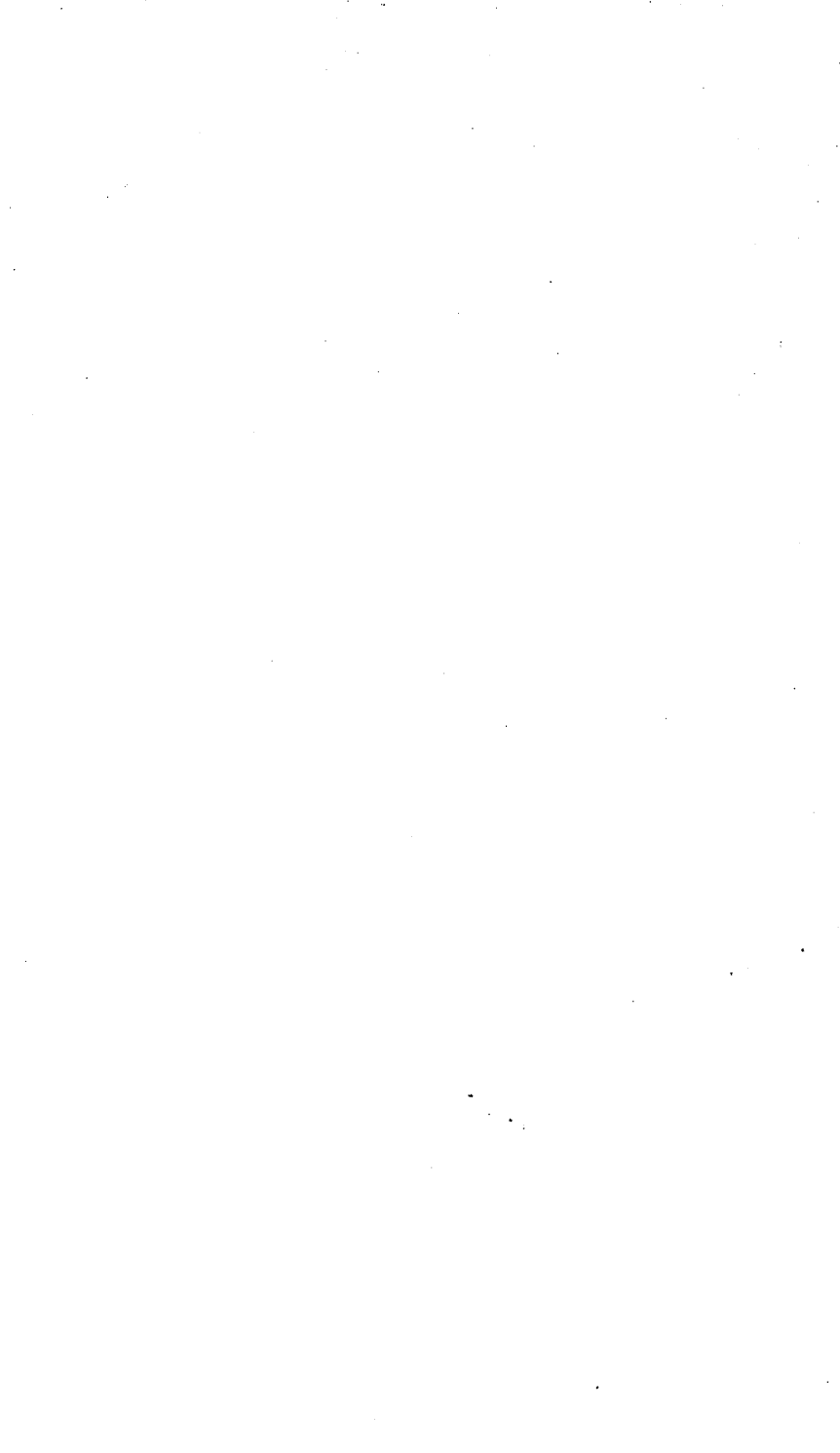
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THE CHURCH

(ECCLESIA)

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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THE CHURCH

(ECCLESIA)

BY

GEORGE DANA BOARDMAN, D.D., LL.D.

AUTHOR OF "STUDIES IN THE CREATIVE WEEK," "STUDIES IN THE MODEL PRAYER,"
"EPIPHANIES OF THE RISEN LORD," "THE DIVINE MAN," "UNIVERSITY
LECTURES ON THE TEN COMMANDMENTS," "THE PROBLEM
OF JESUS," "CORONATION OF LOVE," "THE
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To the Lord of the Ecclesia
THESE STUDIES IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH
ARE REVERENTLY OFFERED

PREFATORY NOTE

THE writer has already given to the public his studies in the Christian Basileia in a volume entitled "The Kingdom." He now gives to the public his studies in the Christian Ecclesia in a complemental volume entitled "The Church."

In treating of the Church, the writer presents his subject under three chief aspects: first, the Church as a Primitive Society; secondly, the Church as a Modern Problem; thirdly, the Church as a Divine Ideal.

In discussing the Church as a Primitive Society, the author writes solely from the standpoint of the exegete; he distinctly disclaims writing from the standpoint of the ecclesiastical historian. All he asks is the careful study of the cited Scriptures themselves.

May the Lord of the Kingdom bless this book to the upbuilding of his Church.

G. D. B.

PHILADELPHIA,
January 1, 1901.

CONTENTS

PART FIRST

THE CHURCH AS A PRIMITIVE SOCIETY

PAGE

EVOLUTION OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH	3
---	---

PART SECOND

THE CHURCH AS A MODERN PROBLEM

CHAPTER I

MISSION OF THE CHURCH	45
---------------------------------	----

CHAPTER II

MODERN PROBLEM OF CHURCH ADJUSTMENTS	55
--	----

CHAPTER III

MODERN PROBLEM OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP	59
---	----

CHAPTER IV

MODERN PROBLEM OF BAPTISM	66
-------------------------------------	----

CHAPTER V

MODERN PROBLEM OF THE LORD'S SUPPER	77
---	----

CHAPTER VI

MODERN PROBLEM OF CHURCH CREEDS	94
---	----

CHAPTER VII

	PAGE
MODERN PROBLEM OF CHURCH WORSHIP	107

CHAPTER VIII

MODERN PROBLEM OF CHURCH POLITY	129
---	-----

CHAPTER IX

MODERN PROBLEM OF LAY MISSIONARIES	135
--	-----

CHAPTER X

MODERN PROBLEM OF CHURCH UNIFICATION	141
--	-----

CHAPTER XI

PICTURE OF THE MATURING CHURCH	158
--	-----

*PART THIRD**THE CHURCH AS A DIVINE IDEAL*

CHAPTER I

VARIOUS MEANINGS OF THE WORD "CHURCH"	161
---	-----

CHAPTER II

DISTINGUISH BETWEEN "A CHURCH" AND "THE CHURCH"	164
---	-----

CHAPTER III

THE CHURCH OF THE KING'S ROCK	170
---	-----

CHAPTER IV

THE CHURCH OF GOD'S TEMPLE	180
--------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER V

	PAGE
THE CHURCH OF CHRIST'S BODY	190

CHAPTER VI

THE CHURCH OF THE KING'S BRIDE	200
--	-----

CHAPTER VII

THE CHURCH OF NEW JERUSALEM	202
---------------------------------------	-----

APPENDIX

LIST OF NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES IN WHICH THE WORD

"ECCLÉSIA" (AS A RELIGIOUS TERM) OCCURS	209
INDEX OF TOPICS	215
INDEX OF SCRIPTURES CITED	219
INDEX OF AUTHORS QUOTED	221

THE CHURCH

(ECCLESIA)

PART FIRST

THE CHURCH AS A PRIMITIVE SOCIETY



EVOLUTION OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH

WE talk a great deal about "The Primitive Church." But what was this "primitive church"? When was it organized? Who organized it? What was its polity? How long was that polity binding? Is the "primitive church" our divine model to-day?

Beware of Preconceptions.—In answering these and similar questions we must try, first of all, to rid ourselves so far as possible of preconceptions. We must remember at the very outset that our King himself while on earth never commanded his followers to "organize a church"; never even hinted any model of a church as an ecclesiastical institution. But we are so accustomed to think of the church as a society divinely organized from the very beginning — our conceptions concerning its organization and polity are so clear and positive — that it is hard for us to realize that there was no organized church at all in our King's own day; that he himself used the word "church" but three times, referring in each case to the "church" as a spiritual company rather than as an ecclesiastical organization; in short, that the term "church" does not occur in the primitive chronicles till a considerable time after the day of

Pentecost. True, we read in the second chapter of the book of Acts that

The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. — *Acts 2: 47 (Authorized Version)*.

But the word "church" does not occur in the original text at all. According to the oldest manuscripts, the true text reads:—

The Lord added together daily those who were being saved.

In fact, we do not meet with a genuine instance of the word "church" till we reach the tragic account of the death of Ananias and Sapphira:—

Great fear came on the whole church, and on all that heard these things. — *Acts 5: 11*.

And even here we hardly know how much this word "church" meant to the writer; whether, for instance, it meant a completely equipped ecclesiastical organization, or only the general community of primitive Christians. In studying, then, the rise of the church as a human organization, it is manifestly our duty first of all to exercise the historic imagination, forgetting the present with its definite convictions, and going back to that pristine period when there was no ecclesiastical organization whatever, neither "church" nor "bishop," neither creed nor polity.

Primitive Expectation of the King's Speedy Return.— Among the many reasons which occasioned the slow growth of the church as an ecclesiastical organization was the primitive expectation of the King's immediate return in glory. This expectation, as the writer has set forth in his previous volume entitled *The Kingdom* (see pp. 299–302), was one of the characteristic traits of the primi-

tive Christians, tingeing with a celestial hue their whole theology and behavior; all their thoughts, beliefs, affections, desires, prayers, plans, deeds, life itself. Accordingly, while this intense expectation lasted, it is reasonable to suppose that the primitive Christians felt no special necessity for organizing permanent ecclesiastical institutions; their King might return in triumph at any moment, and his personal presence would render these institutions needless.

The "Church" a Child of Circumstances. — But as time swept on, and the King did not return, and the future took on a more sober aspect, and practical questions of administration and finance began to press, the primitive Christians felt the necessity of providing permanent methods growing more and more imperative. In other words, the Kingdom of God, or Christ's new society, was a thing of life; and therefore, like all living things, a thing of growth, tending to organization. In still other words, the church, as an ecclesiastical or human institution, grew out of circumstances. It was born of the instincts of loyalty, fellowship, self-defence, propagation, life. Not that the primitive Christians resorted to sudden legislation and irreversible decrees. The apostolic period was formative, instinctively adjusting itself to varying incidents of locality, race, temperament, custom, emergency, etc. Being a living thing, the church instinctively organized itself. Accordingly, its organization was largely unconscious. It was a growth rather than a graft; an inner self-adjustment to the without rather than an outer legislation for the within. Thus it came to pass in the course of time that the citizens of the divine Basileia organized them-

selves into a human ecclesia; the church as an ecclesiastical organization becoming, so to speak, the earthly aspect of the Kingdom of Heaven. We have no elaborate record of these unfoldings; only occasional hints more or less suggestive. How slight most of these hints are is shown by the immense diversity of ecclesiastical constructions which have been put on them, culminating in the enormously various sects and sub-sects of modern Christendom.

Evolution of the Primitive Church.—Of course, I cannot go into minute details of the evolution of the primitive church. Enough that we recall in a cursory manner the outlines of the story in its unfoldings as indicated in the Acts of the Apostles.

The Waiting Brotherhood.—First, there is the picture of the waiting brotherhood. Of this we have two accounts, both by the evangelist Luke:—

They, having worshipped him, returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and were continually in the temple, blessing God. — *Luke* 24: 52, 53.

Then returned they to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey. And when they came in, they went up into the upper room, where were abiding both Peter and John, and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer, with (certain) women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers. — *Acts* 1: 12-14.

Combining these two accounts, we learn, first, that the disciples, although converted from Mosaism to Christianity, still continued loyal to the liturgy of their fathers, blessing God continually in the temple. We learn, secondly, that although they continued to worship God publicly in the temple, yet they also continued to worship God privately

in the upper room. But not the slightest hint is given that these primitive disciples had organized themselves into a "church"; indeed, the word "church" is not mentioned.

Appointment of Matthias. — Next comes the story of the appointment of Matthias to fill the vacancy in the apostolic band occasioned by the treachery of Judas (Acts 1: 15-26). From this story we learn that Peter inaugurated the movement; that the number of disciples present was about a hundred and twenty; that the qualifications for an apostle were that he should have been an intimate companion of the Lord Jesus from the beginning of his public ministry to the day of his ascension; that he should be able to testify to the fact of Christ's resurrection; that two of the brethren were put in nomination — Joseph and Matthias; that prayer was offered to the Omniscient for wisdom to choose between the two candidates; that it was determined to refer the choice to the decision of lots; that the lot fell on Matthias; that he was accordingly numbered with the eleven apostles. But the story does not tell us whether the action was in any strict sense ecclesiastical; whether the mode was Apostolic, Congregational, Presbyterian, or Episcopal; indeed, whether there was any "church" at all; the word "church" is not mentioned.

Day of Pentecost. — Now comes the story of the day of Pentecost, ending with the effect of Peter's pentecostal testimony: —

They then that welcomed his word were baptized; and there were added on that day about three thousand souls. — *Acts 2: 41.*

Observe: no mention has yet been made of any "church," no hint suggested of anything ecclesiastical. All is still incipient and informal.

The Pentecostal Community.—Now emerges a picture of the primitive Christian society in Jerusalem, — a picture so beautiful in its simplicity and grace that it must be presented in full:—

And they were constantly attending on the teaching of the apostles, and the distribution, the breaking of bread, and the prayers. And fear came upon every soul; and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as any one had need. And daily attending with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at their homes, they partook of food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added together daily those who were being saved.—*Acts 2: 42-47.*

Such is a picture of the daily life of the primitive Christian community as it gradually unfolded itself into a definite ecclesiastical organization, which shall hereafter become known as the “church in Jerusalem.” How charming the simplicity of that pristine life! How reverent its worship! How blithesome its spirit! How loving its brotherhood! No wonder that the number of Christ’s disciples grew apace. Yet the term “church” does not occur in the narrative.

Primitive Community of Goods.—Passing over the accounts of the healing of the lame man by Peter and John, their arraignment before the Sanhedrin, and their subsequent release, we come to another beautiful picture of the pentecostal brotherhood, setting forth more in detail the primitive community of goods:—

And the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and no one said that aught of the things which he had was his own, but they had all things common. . . . For there was no one among them

that was in want ; for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things sold, and laid them at the feet of the apostles ; and distribution was made to each one, according as he had need.

And Joseph, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas (which is interpreted, Son of exhortation), a Levite, born in Cyprus, having a field sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the feet of the apostles. — *Acts* 4 : 32-37.

There is no indication that this community of goods was the result of any ecclesiastical action, or vote of any church ; indeed, the word "church" does not occur in the narrative. This spirit of the primitive brotherhood or communism was evidently the paradisaical exuberance of the pentecostal baptism and joy and expectation of their King's immediate, triumphant return. Accordingly, this fraternal generosity was spontaneous, in no sense regulative or ecclesiastical.

First Instance in Acts of the Word "Church." — Now falls the first shadow on the primitive Christian brotherhood ; it is the story of the sacrilegious lie of Ananias and Sapphira, and their tragic punishment (*Acts* 5 : 1-10). Tragical as the story is, its chief importance for us, so far as the subject in hand is concerned, lies in the fact that this dark story records the first genuine instance in the book of Acts of the word "church" : —

And great fear came on the whole church, and on all that heard these things. — *Acts* 5 : 11.

And even here we hardly know how much this word "church," as used at that time, meant ; whether, for instance, it meant a completely equipped ecclesiastical organization, or only the general company of primitive

Christians. Of course, it is natural to infer that there was by this time some kind of organized "church." But human inference is not divine Scripture.

Appointment of the Seven.—And now we come to an important event in the evolution of the primitive "church"; it is the appointment of the seven almoners to serve the Christian community in Jerusalem (Acts 6: 1-6).

The primitive Christian society consisted of two classes of Jews: first, Hebrew Jews, or Jews born in Palestine and speaking the Palestinian language; and, secondly, Hellenistic Jews, or Jews born in foreign lands and speaking Greek, but living in Jerusalem; these latter were called "Grecian Jews." As the number of Christian converts grew, the Grecian Jews began to murmur against the Palestinian Jews, because the widows of the former were neglected in the daily distribution of the charities. It is to be feared that there was some ground for the complaint, for it was perfectly natural that the Palestinian Jews should feel that the widows born in their own land had prior claims to those born in foreign countries; let us hope that the Grecian Jews somewhat exaggerated the neglect of the Hebrew Jews in caring for the Grecian widows. However this may have been, the twelve apostles, as the natural representatives and leaders of the primitive Christian community, summoned the multitude of the disciples (the word "church" does not occur in the narrative), and said to them substantially:—

"Brothers, we fear that there is ground for this complaint of our Grecian friends, and their case should be attended to promptly. But this rapid growth of our community, blessed as it is, has brought with it so many new cares and responsibilities that we cannot think it right

that we should turn aside from proclaiming the glad tidings, in order to serve in these temporalities, however charitable. The time has come for some division of labor. Accordingly, we recommend that you take a survey of our brotherhood, and choose from among them seven ('seven' is our sacred number) brethren of established reputation, spiritually minded, sagacious; and we will appoint them over this service of caring for our unfortunate sisters. Meanwhile we apostles will give ourselves wholly to the service of public worship and proclamation of the good news."

This recommendation met with the hearty approval of the entire community. They did not insist on the duty of "maintaining glorious traditions"; they did not "protest against introducing new-fangled notions." They acted sensibly, wisely adjusting themselves to the new necessities.

And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch, whom they set before the apostles; and having prayed, they laid their hands on them. — *Acts* 6: 5, 6.

Of these seven, none but Stephen and Philip became historic characters; it was then as it is now, the majority of God's saints are anonymous.

Thus the "diaconship" was born of emergency. Yet it afterward proved to be a permanent institution. The poor we have always with us, and whenever we wish we can do good to them. When Valerian about the year 258 commanded Laurentius the martyr to surrender the treasures of the church, the latter sent for the poor members of the congregation, and, presenting them to the magistrates, exclaimed, "These are the church's true treasures!" As long as there is poverty, so long some kind of diaconship will be a necessity. It is pleasant to know that in this matter we have a New Testament precedent. The church

as an ecclesiastical organization is a flexible institution. It did not grow, it could not grow, in any iron mould. Christianity knows no ecclesiastical "finality." The "church" as an organization was made for man, not man for the "church."

Growth of Christianity. — Now we have a picture of the wonderful growth of the new community: —

And the word of God grew; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly; and a great multitude of the priests were obeying the faith. — *Acts 6:7.*

Observe again; the word "church" is not mentioned in this statement; the primitive company is still described as being simply "disciples."

Story of Stephen. — Now follows the pathetic story of the wise, eloquent, spiritual Stephen, whose powerful testimony to the new King ended in his own brave martyrdom. His brilliant advocacy of the new Faith aroused the hostility of the unbelieving Jews, especially those who belonged to certain synagogues. Unable to resist the wisdom and the spirituality with which Stephen spoke, these angered champions of antiquity resorted to the usual practice of defeated disputants: —

They suborned men, who said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God. And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes; and coming upon him, they seized him, and brought him to the Sanhedrin, and set up false witnesses, who said, This man ceases not to speak words against this holy place and the law. For we have heard him say, that this Jesus the Nazarene will destroy this place, and will change the customs which Moses delivered to us. — *Acts 6:11-14.*

It was the ever old, ever new, cry of the apostles of obsoletism, "The fathers were perfect; the past is divine;

to advance is sacrilegious innovation; down with these impious revolutionists!" But Stephen's defence was so masterly that it riveted the gaze of his persecutors, "All that sat in the Sanhedrin, looking intently on him, saw his face as it were an angel's face." But, as in the course of his defence, Stephen charged his auditors with being betrayers and murderers of the Righteous One, they were cut to their hearts, and gnashed their teeth against him, and rushed on him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and, laying down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul, they stoned Stephen; and he fell asleep. And Saul was well pleased with his death. Observe: in all this long, detailed account of the arraignment and defence and martyrdom of Stephen (Acts 6:8-15; 7:1-60), although it was one of the turning-points of Christianity, the word "church" is mentioned only once:—

This is he who was in the church in the wilderness with the angel who spoke to him in the mount Sinai.—*Acts 7:38.*

Even here the word "church" is manifestly a misnomer. "The church in the wilderness" was not a church in the Christian sense of the term; it was the congregation or people of Israel assembled in the wilderness of Sinai:—

This is he who was in the assembly in the wilderness with the angel who spoke to him in the mount Sinai.—*Acts 7:38.*

"The Church which was in Jerusalem."—And now we come to the following statement:—

There arose on that day a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem.—*Acts 8:1.*

The statement is especially interesting because it is the second genuine mention of the word "church" as a Christian organization in the book of Acts. And even here, although a year or two had passed since the ascension of the King, we do not know how far "the church in Jerusalem" was organized; whether, for instance, it had formulated its creed, or prescribed its precise conditions of entrance, or outlined its polity, or elected its pastor or bishop. No doubt it had done less or more of these things; but we have no record of specific transactions. All we know thus far about the primitive church as an ecclesiastical institution is simply this; it was called, "The church which was in Jerusalem."

The Spreading Church. — But the time has come for the church which was in Jerusalem to enlarge its boundaries; and persecution is the enlarger: —

There arose on that day a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem; and all were scattered abroad through the regions of Judæa and Samaria. . . . Saul laid waste the church, entering house after house, and dragging away both men and women, committed them to prison. They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word. — *Acts* 8: 1, 3, 4.

Thus Saul's persecution of the Christians marks an important epoch in the history of the primitive church. Well might the eloquent Tertullian, in his famous defence of the Christians, when persecuted under the reign of Septimius Severus, write to the Rulers of the Roman Empire: —

The oftener we are mown down by you, the more we grow; the blood of Christians is seed. — TERTULLIAN'S *Apologeticus*, c. 50.

Baptism of the Ethiopian. — Passing over the stories of Philip, Peter, and John in Samaria, in which, be it observed,

the word "church" is not mentioned, we come to the story of the baptism of the Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8:26-40). The narrative, intensely interesting throughout, is particularly significant because of the light it sheds on the question of the primitive baptism. We see, for instance, that Philip baptized this Ethiopian solely on the ground that the latter believed that the Hero of the fifty-third of Isaiah was none other than Jesus the Nazarene; there is no evidence that Philip catechized the traveller as to the signs of his having "experienced religion"; he did not admit him on "probation;" he did not submit the case to any "session"; he did not baptize the stranger "into the fellowship of any church": Philip simply announced to the Ethiopian the good news that Jesus was the sufferer of Isaiah's famous Scripture; as soon as they reached water, and the eunuch expressed a desire to be baptized, Philip baptized him into the fellowship of the Kingdom of God. Again, we see that baptism, at least in those primitive days, meant immersion; both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and came up out of the water: an inconvenience wholly needless, if baptism meant only affusion; but a blessed necessity, if baptism meant immersion and emersion. Observe again: the word "church" is not mentioned in all this story of the Ethiopian Eunuch.

Thus did persecution scatter abroad the church which was in Jerusalem, causing her to enlarge the place of her tent, to stretch forth the curtains of her habitations, to lengthen her cords, and at the same time to strengthen her stakes, thus making desolate cities to be inhabited.

Conversion of Saul. — Hitherto, however, the good news

of the Kingdom had been proclaimed only to Jews, and to Samaritans who were semi-Jews living in Palestine; even the Eunuch was a Jewish proselyte, having come up from Ethiopia to Jerusalem to worship according to the Levitical ritual. But the time has now come for the advent of a cosmopolitan hero who shall proclaim the evangel of the Kingdom to non-Jews as well as to Jews, establishing Christian churches throughout the Roman Empire. That cosmopolitan hero is none other than the bitter Pharisee who had been the church's fiercest persecutor, Saul of Tarsus. We are all familiar with the story of that wonderful conversion. Remarkable as it is in itself, it is chiefly remarkable for its tremendous influence in developing the idea of the church as a human organization. Yet, strange as it may seem, in the three detailed accounts of Saul's memorable conversion (Acts 9:1-30; 22:1-21; 26:1-23) the word "church" is not once mentioned.

Consolidation of the Church. — Observe now that one of the results following the conversion of Saul was the consolidation of the Christian communities scattered through Palestine. There is a significant statement in the book of Acts which, according to the oldest Greek text, speaks of these separate Christian communities, not as "churches," but as "the church": —

So the church, throughout all Judæa and Galilee and Samaria, had peace, being built up, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the consolation of the Holy Spirit, was multiplied. — *Acts 9:31.*

This expression, "the church," is significant as already indicating an enlargement of the meaning of the term. Hitherto, it had meant a local congregation or municipal

company: "The church which was in Jerusalem." In the passage before us it has come to mean a territorial society: "The church, throughout all Judæa and Galilee and Samaria." Thus the church as an organized society has taken an onward step, emancipating herself from the limits of mere locality. It justifies in a manner such modern expressions as "The Christian Church," "The Greek Church," "The Church of England," "The Presbyterian Church," "The Baptist Church."

Peter and Cornelius. — Passing over the story of Peter's healing of Æneas at Lydda, and also the story of his resuscitation of Dorcas at Joppa, we come to the story of his welcome of the Roman Cornelius into the Kingdom. For, although it was Paul who was in the eminent sense the apostle to the uncircumcision, yet it was not Paul, but Peter the apostle to the circumcision, who was, practically speaking, the first to open the doors of the Kingdom of God to Gentiles. Peter's welcome of Cornelius, a Roman centurion, marked such an important epoch in the evolution of the primitive church that the story of it is told with particularity of details and even repetitions (Acts 10: 1-48; 11: 1-18). To us it may seem but a commonplace incident. But to those primitive Jewish Christians, heirs to an exclusive Hebrew religion a millennium and a half old, Peter's baptism of the Roman centurion at Cæsarea marked a tremendous step onward in the development of the church as an organization. It was the beginning of the breaking down of the stupendous middle wall of the partition which had hitherto separated Jew and non-Jew. But while it was Peter who began the demolition, it was Paul who finished it. Yet throughout the minute narrative

of the conversion of Cornelius the word "church" does not occur.

The Church in Antioch. — And now we come to the story of the church in Antioch. Next to Jerusalem, Antioch is perhaps the most interesting city mentioned in the New Testament. Four things make it especially interesting to the sons of the Kingdom.

First Gentile Church. — First, Antioch was the birthplace of the first Gentile church :—

Now they who were dispersed by reason of the distress that arose about Stephen, went on as far as Phœnicia, and Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the word to no one but Jews only. But some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who, having come to Antioch, spoke to the Greeks also, publishing the good news of the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them ; and a great number that believed turned to the Lord.

But the report concerning them came to the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem ; and they sent forth Barnabas as far as Antioch. Who having come, and seen the grace of God, rejoiced ; and he exhorted all, that with purpose of heart they should cleave to the Lord. For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great multitude was added to the Lord. And he departed to Tarsus, to seek for Saul ; and having found him, he brought him to Antioch. And it came to pass, that even for a whole year they came together in the church, and taught a great multitude. — *Acts* 11 : 19-26.

The Name "Christians." — Secondly, Antioch was the birthplace of the name "Christians" :—

And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch. — *Acts* 11 : 26.

Who gave the followers of the new King this name, "Christians"? Was it the followers of Jesus themselves? Hardly ; they were wont to speak of themselves as "believers, brethren, disciples, followers, those of the Way,"

etc. Was it the Jews? Hardly; for this word "Christian" meant "Anointed," and was equivalent to the Hebrew word "Messiah"; accordingly, for Jews to call the followers of Jesus "Christians" was to admit virtually that they were followers of the Messiah; no Jew would admit that; the Jewish epithet for this new sect was "Galileans, Nazarene, Heretics." Was it the heathen of Antioch? Probably; they knew little, and cared less, about this foreigner called Jesus; but they noticed that his followers were forever using this word "Christ" in their talk; and so they called these foreigners "Christ-ians." Antioch was a heathen city; and it was in Antioch, some ten years after the Ascension, that the disciples were first called "Christians," or followers of one "Christ." What a pity it is that the followers of Christ ever had any other name!

First Christian Relief Fund.—Thirdly, Antioch was the birthplace of organized Christian charity:—

And in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified through the Spirit that there should be a great famine over all the inhabited earth; which came to pass in the days of Claudius. And the disciples, according as any one was prospered, determined each of them to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judæa. Which also they did, sending it to the elders through the hands of Barnabas and Saul.—*Acts* 11: 27-30.

This narrative is deeply interesting for several reasons. First, it is the first recorded instance of organizing a Christian Relief Fund. Secondly, this Christian Relief Fund was started by converted Gentiles to help converted Jews; serving, so to speak, as the first practical bridge between Heathendom and Hebrewdom. Thirdly, it is the first mention of "elder" or "presbyters" as a Christian term.

Fourthly, this Christian Relief Fund afterward proved to be the occasion of Paul's frequent appeals to Gentile churches for contributions in behalf of the poor saints dwelling in Judæa, and his frequent visits to Jerusalem as the chief collector and almoner of the Fund. For example, he writes to the church in Corinth thus :—

Concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so also do ye. On the first day of the week, let each one of you lay by him in store, according as he is prospered, that there may be no collections made when I come. And when I arrive, whomsoever ye shall approve, them I will send with letters to carry your benefaction to Jerusalem. And if it be worth while for me also to go, they shall go with me.—*1 Corinthians* 16 : 1-4. See also *Acts* 24 : 17 ; *Romans* 15 : 25-28 ; *2 Corinthians* 8 : 1-24 ; 9 : 1-15 ; *Galatians* 2 : 10 ; etc.

Birth of Foreign Missions.—Fourthly, Antioch was the birthplace of Foreign Missions :—

Now there were in Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers ; Barnabas, and Simeon who was called Niger, and Lucius the Cyrenean, and Manaen the foster-brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. And while they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said,

Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul to the work to which I have called them.

Then, having fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.—*Acts* 13 : 1-3.

It was a turning-point in human history, for it was the birth of the sense of universal brotherhood. Marathon, Actium, Waterloo, Gettysburg are great names ; but they pale before the name of Antioch in Syria ; for here it was that the Missionary Enterprise was inaugurated. Not that there never had been any missionary efforts ; the Jews, from the time of John Hyrcanus, had been zealous missionaries ; but it was in behalf of Judaism ; indeed, it was

this fiery propagandism of the Jew that drew from our King one of his fiercest denunciations:—

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites ! because ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he has become so, ye make him twofold more a son of hell than yourselves.—*Matthew* 23:15.

Not that this summons of the Holy Spirit in Antioch was the first proclamation of Christian Missions; twelve years before, our risen King, in his manifestation on the Galilean mountain, had proclaimed his royal Missionary Commission. Not that the disciples had never offered the gospel to the Gentiles; Peter had gone from Joppa to Cæsarea to announce the glad tidings to Roman Cornelius, and Christians of Cyprus and Cyrene had gone to this same Antioch, publishing the good news of the Lord Jesus to the Greeks or Hellenistic Jews. But these missionary movements had been informal and desultory. It was in Antioch of Syria, about the year 45, that the first Foreign Missionary Society was organized. Henceforth evangelic propagandism was the policy of the Christian church.

Narrowness of the Ancient Jews.—To us, living amid the broad thoughts and giant movements of this closing year of the nineteenth century, that ancient sending forth of Barnabas and Saul may not seem especially remarkable. But to the infant church in Antioch it was something colossal. It is almost impossible for us to bedwarf ourselves far enough backward to understand the narrow spirit of those pygmy days. Recall the intense, almost unparalleled exclusiveness of the ancient Jew. The only horizon he knew was the horizon which bounded his own tiny Palestine. To this intense and bitter exclusivism his

own religion, although divinely given, powerfully contributed. Abram had been summoned from Ur of the Chaldees, to become the founder of a distinct, isolated nationality; for salvation was to be from the Jews; that is to say, the promised Saviour was to come of Jewish stock. But the Jew perverted the meaning of his great vocation. Proud in the consciousness that to his race belonged the adoption, and the Shechinah, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the liturgy, and the promises, and the fathers, and the coming Messiah, — the Jew failed to see that the reason why his nation had been thus specialized and isolated was that this particularization might become the avenue of a universal salvation. True, many an Old Testament prophecy had been distinctly missionary. But it had been expressed in Jewish phraseology, representing the Gentiles as coming to the Palestinian Zion. And because the phraseology was Jewish, the Jew construed the missionary prophecies Jewishly. He had no idea that any Gentile could be saved, unless he disowned his nationality, and inserted himself into the Hebrew stock, by submitting to the Abrahamic rite of circumcision. Hence the reluctance of Jonah to visit Nineveh, and his anger at the repentance of that heathen city. Here was the secret of the rejection of Jesus in the synagogue of Nazareth; his townsmen listened to him with delight, until he reminded them that there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when there came a great famine over all the land, and yet to no widow was he sent, except to one in Gentile Zarephath; and there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha, and yet no one of them was cleansed, but only Naaman, the Gentile Syrian; and when they heard

these things, they were all filled with wrath, and rose up, and cast him forth out of the city, and led him to the brow of the hill, to throw him down headlong. What though Peter was one of the King's favorite three, and had been invested with the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven? It was needful that he should behold the vision of the descending great sheet, before he was willing to open the Kingdom of Heaven to Gentile Cornelius. The first ecclesiastical conference or convention of which we have a record was that which met in Jerusalem, about the year 50, to consider the question whether it was possible for a Gentile to be saved without being circumcised; that is, without becoming a Jew. Even after that council had decided that circumcision was no longer necessary, Peter himself, although he had participated in the congress and emphatically put himself on the catholic side of the record, disowned in Antioch that record, separating himself from the converted Gentiles, refusing to eat with them; so that Paul was compelled to withstand him to the face, and openly rebuke him before the church. When Paul addressed the mob in Jerusalem, from the staircase of the tower of Antonia, they listened to him quietly, until he recited the King's words to him in the temple, — "Depart, for I will send thee far hence to the Gentiles;" then the mob tossed their garments about, and threw dust into the air, and shouted, "Away with such a one from the earth! for it is not fit that he should live." In fact, it was the Jewish party which was Paul's chief persecutor to the bitter end; and the secret of their persecution was his maintenance of the doctrine that under the new covenant Gentiles and Jews were on an equality before God.

Catholicity of Paul. — When therefore the apostle Paul, in obedience to the commission of Antioch, was set apart to the work of foreign missions, he inaugurated a movement which was not only absolutely novel but also intensely brave. Even now, in these days when our missionaries have the advantages of steamships and telegraphs, and, above all, the endorsement of Christendom for their work, it is justly thought a heroic thing to become a foreign missionary. But how much more heroic it was in those days of an infantile Christianity and a pygmy sense of brotherhood, especially when the mere fact of recognizing the equality of Gentiles with Jews seemed to subvert the foundations of a divine and exclusive religion already two millenniums old. In fact, the mission of Paul was a reversal of the mission of Abraham. Great was Abraham's call; but it was a call to become the founder of a single nationality and a local religion. Greater was Paul's call; for it was a call to become the founder of a universal brotherhood and a cosmopolitan religion. He himself was the first conspicuous illustration of the parable of the good Samaritan. According to our King, neighborhood does not consist in local nearness; it is not a matter of ward, or city, or state, or nation, or kinship, or guild, or political party, or religious denomination; neighborhood means a glad readiness to relieve distress wherever found. According to human teachers, it was the Jewish priest and Jewish Levite who were neighbors of the Jewish traveller to Jericho. According to the divine Teacher, it was the Samaritan foreigner who was the real neighbor of the waylaid Jew. That is to say, every human being who is in distress, and whom I can practically help, whether he lives in Philadel-

phia or in Manila, is my neighbor. In brief, opportunity is the only practical limit of neighborhood. And of this doctrine of neighborhood or sense of universal brotherhood Paul, I repeat, was the first superb human illustration. Being the King's chosen vessel, to convey, as in an elect vase, his name before Gentiles, he glorified his ministry, feeling himself a debtor to every human being, whether elegant Athenian or barbarous Scythian. And he illustrated the King's doctrine of neighborhood, because he had caught the King's own spirit. For the Son of God himself was mankind's great, typical Neighbor; time's great foreign Missionary, commissioned by the eternal Father to go down to our far-off alien race, that he might bind up the wounds of our waylaid and bleeding humanity, and convey it to the inn of his own redeeming grace. Accordingly, the moment the Son of man bowed his head and gave back his spirit to his Father, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, thus signifying that henceforth the way into the true Holy of holies was open to all alike; to Roman Clement as well as to Hebrew Peter; to Greek Athanasius as well as to Hebrew John; to Karen Kothabyoo as well as to Hebrew Paul. For Christ Jesus is our peace, making both Jew and non-Jew one, breaking down the middle of the partition which parted them, blending the two into one new man in himself, reconciling both in one body to God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; so bringing good news of peace to Gentiles who were far off and to Jews who were nigh; for through him both Jews and non-Jews have access in one Spirit to the Father. And St. Paul was mastered by the divine Peacemaker's spirit. As the

Father had sent the Son into the world, even so did the Son send Paul into the world. Nobly conscious of this divine mission, he recognized in every human being, however distant or degraded, a personal neighbor and brother. And so he won for himself the glorious title, "The Apostle to the Gentiles." And for this sublime vocation he had been in an eminent sense very especially fitted. By birth a Jew, he was familiar with the living oracles. By citizenship a Roman, he was allowed a freedom throughout the imperial dominions which would have been denied him as simply a Jew. By culture a Grecian, he had the ear of the nations; for Greek was the cosmopolitan tongue. And so he went forth into all the world of the vast Roman Empire, preaching, it might be said almost literally, the gospel to every creature. And in thus proclaiming everywhere the glad tidings of one common Saviour, in whom is neither Jew nor Gentile, Paul became the first asserter of the characteristic and glorious doctrine of modern times,—Human Brotherhood. In the matter of the "solidarity of the nations," Paul the apostle towers over every other earthly hero:—

Becoming, when the time had birth,
A lever to uplift the earth,
And roll it in another course.

—*In Memoriam.*

St. Paul is thus the great watershed of mankind; on that side of him all tended to narrowness and hate; on this side of him all tends to breadth and love. With Paul the missionary begins the true comity of nations, the first convocation of

The Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World.

—*Locksley Hall.*

Passing over the account of the first missionary tour of Barnabas and Saul (in the course of which the name of Saul was exchanged for the name of Paul), we come to the story of the great Christian Conference held in Jerusalem about the year 50. As this was one of the epoch-marking events in the unfolding of the primitive church, we must give it special study.

The Christian Conference in Jerusalem. — The church in Antioch was, as we have seen, largely made up of Gentile converts. Not being Jews, these converts had not been required to submit to the Jewish rite of circumcision. But ritual questions, from the first century to the close of this nineteenth, have been the chief theme of ecclesiastical disputes. Certain members of the mother church in Jerusalem felt their responsibility in this matter of ritual so deeply that they took the pains to go down to Antioch, to regulate the young brotherhood there, saying, "Unless you Gentiles submit to the sign of God's covenant with Abraham by being circumcised, you cannot be saved." Doubtless they were perfectly sincere in this. Jehovah, God of their fathers, had solemnly prescribed circumcision as the sign of the Hebrew nationality. The new King, himself observant of other rites of Mosaism, had not repealed this ancient divine ordinance. No wonder then that, when these conservative ritualists from the mother church in Jerusalem arrived in Antioch, they stirred up a great discussion and even alienation. Vain was it that Paul and Barnabas, themselves freed from the shackles of Judaism, argued and expostulated with these "conscientious" Judaizers. The debate still went on. Finally it was thought advisable to send delegates to Jerusalem, to confer with

the mother church about this question. Accordingly, Paul, Barnabas, Titus, and some others were commissioned as delegates. It was a distance of three hundred miles. So momentous was the question before the coming Conference that some representatives of the church in Antioch escorted the commissioners at least part of the way. Arrived at Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders (note the three titles or specifications, "church, apostles, presbyters"). Having received a mother's welcome, they reported, apparently at some preliminary meeting, how great things God had wrought through them in the matter of the Gentiles. But the ritualists would not be convinced. Some of them had belonged to the sect of the Pharisees, and, naturally maintaining their heritage of Pharisaic ceremonialism, insisted on pressing their point, declaring, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to charge them to keep the law of Moses."

The Discussion. — Accordingly, the apostles and the presbyters came together to see about this matter. It was not, strictly speaking, an ecclesiastical council or convention; it was rather a Christian conference or consultation. It was doubtless an exciting debate. As is usual on such occasions, the small orators seem to have been the first to take the floor. After much discussion, Peter the Rock arose (how breathless now the attention!), and said to them (the address is probably but an abstract): —

Speech of Peter. — Brethren, ye yourselves know that from early days God made choice among us, that through my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. And God who knows the heart bore them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, just as to us;

and made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith. Now therefore why do ye tempt God, putting a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But, through the grace of the Lord Jesus, we believe that we shall be saved, in the same manner as they also. — *Acts 15:7-11.*

It is Peter's last appearance in the book of Acts, and nobly does he acquit himself. His argument is that most resistless of arguments — the argument from personal experience. No wonder all the multitude became silent.

Story of Barnabas and Paul. — And now two men rose to speak, to whom the entire Conference gave profound attention. They were Barnabas, the celebrated son of exhortation, and Paul, the still more celebrated apostle to the Gentiles. They were fresh from their great missionary tour among the uncircumcised Gentiles, and narrated the wonderful success which God had given them in proclaiming the good news to the people of heathen countries: thus adding their own missionary confirmation to the personal testimony of Peter, the leader of the original Twelve.

Speech of James. — And now rose to speak one who in some respects was more distinguished than Paul and even Peter; it was James the Lord's brother, pastor or bishop of the church in Jerusalem, surnamed "The Just." It was a fine instance of parliamentary strategy; first, obscures: then Peter the Rock; then Paul the master apostle; then James, pastor-bishop of the mother church and brother of the King. Paraphrasing his address, his argument is substantially as follows — *Acts 15:* —

"Brethren, our comrade Peter has spoken of his receiving the Gentile Cornelius into the Christian community. In thus opening the kingdom of heaven to the uncircumcised, he but fulfilled many an ancient

prophecy; notably the prediction of the prophet Amos, who, under the figure of Jehovah's rebuilding of David's fallen tabernacle, foretold the admission of the Gentiles into the Christian church. My opinion then is that we ought not to vex our Gentile friends with needless ceremonies and regulations. Let us try to conciliate our brethren of both parties, alike the advocates of progress and the advocates of conservatism; for even in Gentile lands the law of Moses, as in the generations gone by, is still preached, being read in the synagogues of every city every sabbath. Let us write a circular letter to the Gentile churches, asking them to abstain, not only from heathen vices, such as fornication, but also from food offered to idols, and from what has been strangled, and from blood — practices which devout Jews regard as heinous as fornication.

The Circular Letter. — This counsel of the King's brother was so judicious that the entire assembly, including the apostles and the presbyters and the whole church, promptly accepted it, and chose a formal deputation, consisting of such eminent brethren as Paul, Barnabas, Judas called Barsabas, and Silas, to proceed to Antioch, and bear the following encyclical:—

The apostles and the elders and the brethren, to the brethren from the Gentiles throughout Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greeting:—

Forasmuch as we have heard, that some who went out from us troubled you with words, subverting your souls, to whom we gave no charge; it seemed good to us, having become of one mind, to choose men and send them to you, with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men who have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who themselves also by word of mouth carry you the same message. For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no further burden except these necessary things; that ye abstain from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves, it will be well with you. Farewell. — *Acts* 15: 23-29.

Effect of the Encyclical. — The deputation, having been duly dismissed by the Conference, proceeded to Antioch,

where, having summoned the entire church, they delivered the document, which was received with joy, the church being strengthened in the faith.

Such is the story of the first general Ecclesiastical Conference of Christendom, held in the city of Jerusalem, about 50 A.D. Reviewing the story, let us note:—

The Real Question before the Conference.—First, what the real question before the Conference was. The question was nothing less than this, Shall Mosaism be the stock root of the church, and Christianity only a graft; or *vice versa*? Shall the spirit yield to the letter, or the letter to the spirit? Which shall prevail—a principle, or an ordinance? the essential, or an incidental? As we have seen, much could be said on both sides. On the one hand, circumcision was a divine ordinance, some two thousand years old, the sign of Jehovah's covenant with Israel, the seal of revealed religion; the new King had not repealed this ancient ordinance; to surrender it was to surrender all the past; etc. On the other hand, the new Kingdom was a kingdom of life and spirit; it was spreading among the Gentiles; the Holy Spirit was falling upon non-Jews as well as upon Jews: why should a Greek, a Roman, a Scythian, disown his nationality and swear allegiance to a foreign stock? Is it not one of the essential marks of Christianity that it is a life rather than a form? Thus the question before the Conference in Jerusalem was really a momentous problem, threatening to divide Christendom in its very beginning.

The Real Decision of the Conference.—Secondly, observe what the real decision of the Jerusalem Conference was. On the one hand, it was adverse to the Ritualists. When

we remember that this Conference was held, not in Antioch or any other Gentile city, but in Jerusalem itself, — the very headquarters of Mosaic ritualism, — and that the immense majority of the Convention, including the apostles themselves, were intense Jews, the decision of the Conference was a stupendous step onward. It was almost as though the Episcopal Church, in some General Convention, should decide to give up the Prayer-book; or the Presbyterian Church, in some General Assembly, to surrender the Westminster Catechism; or the Methodist Church, in some General Conference, to dispense with the Book of Discipline; or the Baptist Church, in some extraordinarily summoned Congress of denominational legislation, to abandon immersion as a prerequisite to Communion. On the other hand, while the decision of the Conference was in its spirit adverse to the Ritualists, yet the decision was in its form conciliatory. It is as though they had said: —

“We Jews impose on you non-Jews no Mosaic burdens; all we ask from you non-Jews is to abstain from those heathen vices of which fornication is an example, and to have regard to our Jewish scruples by abstaining from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled.”

An Instructive Side-light. — Before leaving this account of the Conference in Jerusalem, let us glance at an instructive side-light given by the apostle Paul in his letter to the Galatians. He is vindicating his apostolic call, authority, independence. He declares that he had received the gospel, not indirectly from man, but directly through Jesus Christ, having been taught by him in Arabia; that he did not go up to Jerusalem till three

years after his conversion ; that he remained there only fifteen days, during which time he saw none of the apostles except Peter and James the brother of the Lord. And then he proceeds as follows : —

Then, after fourteen years [from his conversion], I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking also Titus with me. And I went up according to a revelation, and laid before them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles ; but privately, before those of repute, lest by any means I should be running, or had run in vain. But not even Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised ; and that because of the false brethren stealthily brought in, who crept in to spy out our freedom which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage ; to whom not even for an hour did we yield by the [required] subjection, that the truth of the gospel might abide with you. But from those reputed to be somewhat, — whatever they were, it matters not to me, God accepts not man's person, — to me I say those of repute imparted nothing. But, on the contrary, when they saw that I had been intrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, as Peter was with that of the circumcision ; (for he who wrought for Peter in respect to the apostleship of the circumcision, wrought for me also in respect to the Gentiles ;) and having learned the grace that was given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas right hands of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcision ; only, that we should remember the poor, which very thing I was also zealous to do. — *Galatians 2 : 1-10*.

This account of the Conference in Jerusalem given by the apostle Paul, although different in several particulars from the account given by the evangelist Luke in the fifteenth of Acts, is not inconsistent with it ; on the other hand, it is complementary to it. We learn from it certain interesting details which are not mentioned in the book of Acts. For example ; we learn, first, that when Paul went up from Antioch to attend the Jerusalem Conference he

took with him Titus, one of his missionary comrades. We learn, secondly, that, although Paul went up as one of the delegates sent by the brethren in Antioch, yet he also went up according to a divine revelation; thus showing that one may receive two commissions to do the same thing, — the one human, the other divine. We learn, thirdly, that St. Paul sought and obtained a private interview with influential persons before engaging in the public conference; thus proving that he was a Christian master of parliamentary strategy, blending the wariness of serpents with the simplicity of doves. We learn, fourthly, that an enormous pressure was brought to bear on Paul by the Judaic party to compel his Gentile friend Titus to be circumcised. We learn, fifthly, that Paul chivalrously, persistently, successfully, resisted this pressure on the ground that to yield to this demand of persons whom he indignantly calls false brethren, stealthily creeping in to spy out the freedom which is in Christ, was to imperil the liberty of Gentile Christians; thus showing how the same man can be soft as a zephyr to the weak, and firm as a boulder to the false. We learn, sixthly, Paul's sensitive dignity; although conscious of the lateness of his apostolic call, as the one born out of due time, yet he places himself on an equality with the original Twelve, declaring that, renowned as some of them were, they had told him nothing new; the only suggestion they offered him being to remember the poor saints in Jerusalem, — a suggestion which he himself had anticipated and for years had been practically carrying out. We learn, seventhly, a lesson of magnanimous equity; when James, Peter, John, the three most celebrated of the apostles, learned that God had blessed the foreign labors

of Barnabas and Paul as signally as their own domestic labors, they cheerfully recognized the economic principle of the division of labor, heartily giving to Paul and Barnabas right hands of fellowship in prosecuting the work of foreign missions.

Abiding Lesson of the Jerusalem Conference.— Take it all in all, the Christian Conference in Jerusalem was the model of an “Ecclesiastical Council.” Observe what the real abiding lesson is for ourselves: Let the church of to-day cultivate the spirit of love; not merely the spirit of tolerance, but also the spirit of unity. While in the realm of principle we must remain as firm as God’s own law, in the realm of method we must be as yielding as God’s own air. We must not impose on one another burdens which are non-essential or ambiguous; such as rites, creeds, tests. Let us pursue the things which make for peace, and things by which one may build up another.

A Swift Panorama.— But we must hasten our steps. Enough that we simply recall, as we pass onward, the sharp contention between Barnabas and Paul in the matter of John Mark; the circumcision of Timothy on account of his Jewish neighbors; Paul’s vision of the Macedonian phantom; his embarkation for Europe; the conversion and baptism of Lydia and the Philippian jailer; Paul’s missionary visits at Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth, in which latter place he worked at his old trade of tentmaking; the special tuition of a learned Alexandrine Jew named Apollos; Paul’s protracted stay in Ephesus, where he found the twelve disciples of John the forerunner, and baptized them into the name of the Lord Jesus; his signal success in Ephesus; his Sunday communion with the disciples in

Troas ; his farewell address to the presbytery of the church in Ephesus ; his vow of purification in Jerusalem ; his brave defence of himself and his King before the mob in Jerusalem, before the Sanhedrin, before Felix, before Agrippa ; his appeal to Cæsar, his arrival at Rome, where he remained two whole years, preaching the kingdom of God. Thus ends the book of the Acts of the Apostles.

Infrequency of the Term "Church" in the Acts.—Yet in all this inspired history of the primitive, "apostolic church," containing twenty-eight chapters, one thousand and eight verses, and covering a period of some thirty years, the word "church" as a Christian organization occurs but nineteen times, or only once in every fifty-six verses. It is a very significant hint, at least to thoughtful readers ; for it shows how slight was the importance which the inspired chronicler attached to the "church" considered as an ecclesiastical organization. What church historian in our time—whether Baptist, Episcopalian, Methodist, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic—could write a history of the origin and growth of his own church for thirty years, yet mention the word "church" but nineteen times ?

General Survey of the Primitive Church.—Before leaving this branch of our general subject, it will be proper to say something about the character, gifts, and customs of the primitive church. Not that we have such precise information about them as we might desire. But there are certain things which we do know sufficiently well. Let us confine ourselves strictly to the apostolic period, not entering post-apostolic history.

The Primitive Church a Mixed Community.—We know, for example, that the primitive church consisted of mixed

characters. Our King himself foreshadowed this in his own parables of the Wheat and Tares, and the Net. As in the church of to-day, so in the church of the apostolic period, there was an intermixture of virtue and vice, truthfulness and falsehood, generosity and covetousness, nobleness and meanness, meekness and pride, courage and cowardice, faith and doubt, sincerity and hypocrisy, temples of God and synagogues of Satan. But more of this anon.

The Primitive Charisms.—Again, we know something of the charisms or spiritual gifts to the primitive church. We know, for instance, that there were gifts of miracles, healings, helps, governings, discerning of spirits, various kinds of tongues, interpretation of tongues, prophecy, etc.; these special gifts being, so to speak, the largesses showered on the primitive church by the ascending Conqueror:—

Having ascended on high,
He led captivity captive,
And gave gifts to men. — *Ephesians* 4:8.

But although these special charisms of the apostolic period had been divinely bestowed, yet they tempted the primitive Christians into unseemly pride, selfishness, jealousy. For example, the gift of tongues, or the sudden ability to speak foreign languages, was thought to be more brilliant than the gift of prophecy, or the speaking under the Spirit's special influence to the upbuilding of personal character. Accordingly, the apostle Paul, in writing to the Corinthian Christians who prided themselves on this showy gift of tongues, says:—

He that speaks in a tongue builds up himself; but he that prophesies, builds up the church. . . . I thank God, I speak with tongues more than ye all. But in church [assembly] I had rather speak five words

through my understanding, that I may instruct others also, than ten thousand words in a [foreign] tongue. — 1 *Corinthians* 14: 1-8.

Indeed, this whole fourteenth chapter of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, preluded as it is by his immortal coronation of Love in his thirteenth chapter, is a splendid commentary on the altruistic use of personal gifts or talents.

Immersion the Primitive Baptism. — Again, we know that the primitive baptism meant immersion. This is the emphatic testimony of the authoritative scholars, for example, lexicographers, antiquarians, historians, exegetes. But more of this anon.

Primitive Mode of observing the Lord's Supper. — Again, we know that the primitive church were in the habit of communing with their King in his memorial Supper; sometimes daily breaking bread as individuals at their homes (Acts 2: 46); sometimes as organized companies assembled on the first day of the week (Acts 20: 7); sometimes, alas, debauching the Holy Supper into selfish orgies: —

When therefore ye assemble yourselves together, it is not to eat a supper of the Lord; for in eating, each takes before others his own supper; and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What! have ye not houses [of your own] to eat and drink in? Or despise ye the church of God and put shame on those who have not? — 1 *Corinthians* 11: 20-22.

But more of this anon.

Officers of the Primitive Church. — Again, we know something of the administration of the primitive church. We know, for instance, that there were apostles, prophets, teachers, evangelists, bishops, pastors, presbyters, deacons, etc. We know that the apostles had been the personal intimates and were the immediate representatives of the

risen King; that the prophets spoke under the special influence of the Holy Spirit; that evangelists were proclaimers of the good tidings; that "elder" or "presbyter" was the Jewish term and "bishop" was the Greek term for what we call a "minister" or "clergyman"; that "pastors" were Christian shepherds; that "deacons" were Christian assistants, almoners, etc. But more of this anon.

The Primitive Theology.—Once more, we know that the theology of the primitive church was apostolic, and therefore personal rather than ecclesiastical. For systematic or scientific theology is the slow growth of prolonged and elaborate thinking. The apostles had no time for this systematic elaboration of their thoughts; and therefore their theology, however true in itself, was personal rather than philosophical, answering to the individual idiosyncrasies or temperaments of each separate apostle. Accordingly, it is right to use such expressions as the Pauline theology, the Petrine theology, the Johannine theology, etc.

Our Knowledge of the Primitive Church largely Inferential.—But while we know such things as these, we are ignorant of other things which we would like to know. For example; we do not know whether the primitive church polity was Congregational, Episcopal, Presbyterian, or simply Apostolic. Even if we knew that the primitive polity was apostolic, we do not know how far it was divinely authoritative. Of course, the apostles were "inspired." But even inspired apostles were not perfect. Recall the paroxysm of anger between Barnabas and Paul in the matter of John Mark, and the consequent dissolution of their missionary partnership. What though Peter the

Rock had been divinely invested with the keys of the kingdom of heaven? Long years after this divine investiture, the apostle Paul felt obliged to withstand this same Peter the Rock to the face, and rebuke him for his apostasy in refusing to continue his communion with uncircumcised Christians. Even St. Paul himself seems to have modified his own opinions in respect to our King's return, as indicated in his earlier letters and in his later. Inspiration is by no means omniscience. And if this was true of the apostles, how much truer it was of the laity. The truth is, what we know about the primitive church as an organized society is mainly inferential. Different minds will of course draw different inferences according to their different environments, trainings, temperaments, etc.; witness the immense varieties of creeds and polities alleged to be based on the same Scriptures, ranging all the way between the elaborate churchism of the Romanists to the simple "meetings" of the Quakers. It becomes us then in quoting Scriptures bearing on these ecclesiastical matters to quote cautiously, modestly, charitably.

The Primitive Church not our Ecclesiastical Model.—

But even though we had an elaborate record of the evolution of the primitive church as an ecclesiastical organization, it by no means follows that this primitive organization is binding on us to-day as our ecclesiastical model. Let us never forget that the apostolic period was wholly exceptional alike in its nature, in its endowments, and in its personalities; and it is manifestly absurd to undertake to deduce a canon or law from an exception. Besides, the primitive church was, as a matter of historic fact, full of imperfections. True, we are accustomed to dream of the

primitive church as a happy company of beautiful saints, whose every act is our law ; and so we love to talk of what we call "the Apostolic Church," "the New Testament Church," "the duty of returning to the New Testament Model of a Christian Church," and so forth. We forget that the primitive church was, as a matter of fact, made up of two classes of persons utterly unpromising and anti-thetic : on the one hand, converted Jews, brought up under the iron yoke of pharisaic rabbinism ; and, on the other hand, converted Gentiles, brought up under the equally iron yoke of pagan vices. Indeed, most of the Epistles were written for the express purpose of warning the early churches against theological heresies and practical immoralities. Recall, for instance, the doctrinal heresies of the church in Rome ; the open immoralities of the church in Corinth ; the theological apostasies of the churches in Galatia ; the backslidings and slumberings and falsehoods of the church in Ephesus ; the enemies of the cross of Christ in the church in Philippi ; the false asceticism and angel worship practised by the church in Colosse ; the disorderly idlers in the church in Thessalonica ; the false teachers and tattlers and busybodies in Timothy's parish ; the foolish casuists and genealogical wranglers in the diocese of Titus ; the slaveholder in the church in the house of Philemon ; the stunted babes in the church of the Hebrews ; the hollow ritualists and selfish fashionables whom James lashed so pitilessly ; the libertines and rioters whom Peter scorched so mercilessly ; the many antichrists who had already risen in the church of St. John's own day ; the drunken revellers at the Christian love-feasts whom Jude denounced so fiercely ; the apostates and Ba-

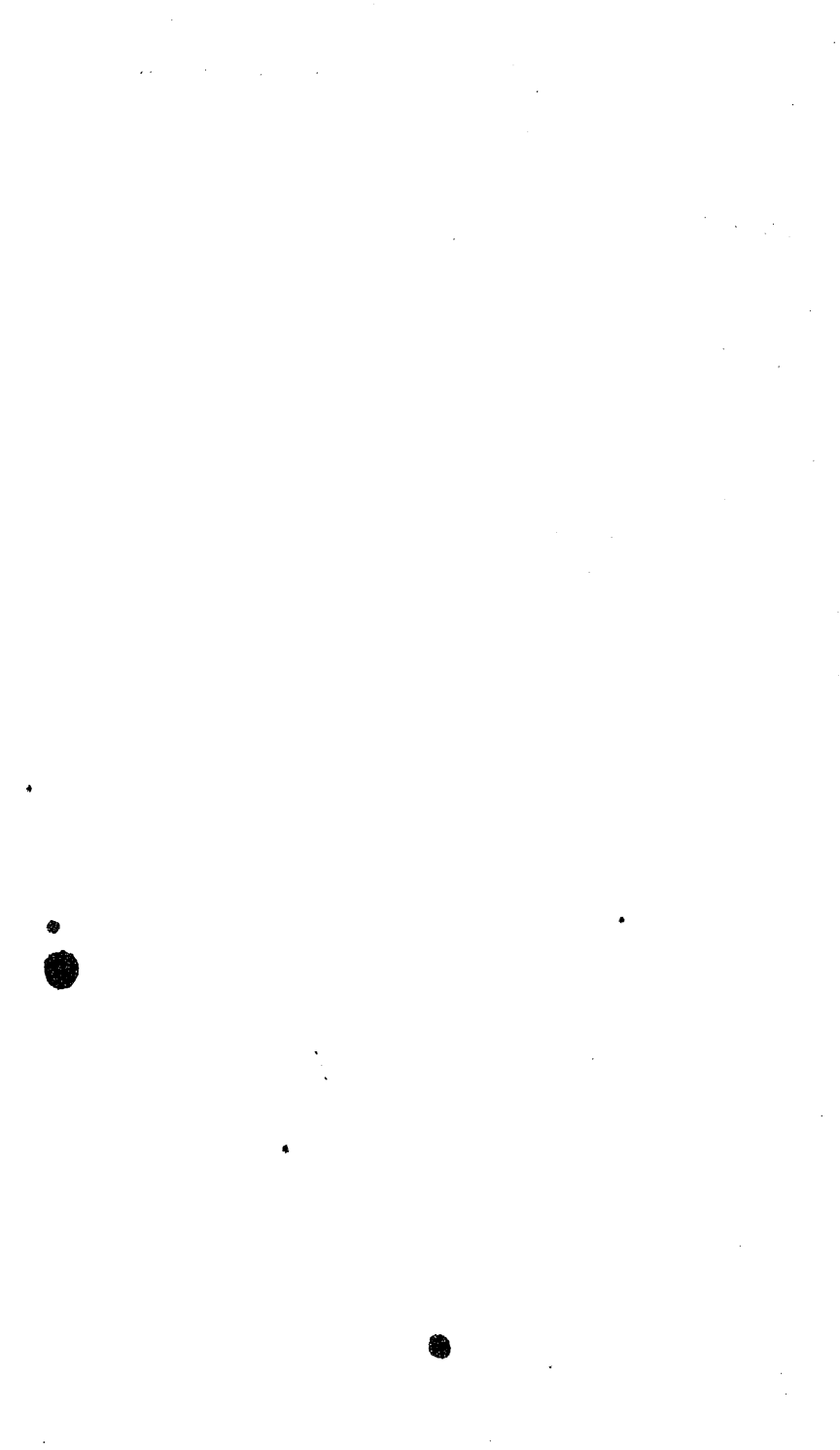
laamites and Jezebel-seducers in the apocalyptic churches. Beware then of apotheosizing the primitive church even though it was founded and administered by apostles. The Flowery Kingdom is not the only country where people are given to the worship of ancestors. In fact, perfect moral beginnings are against all analogies of living nature; all lessons of human history. First embryo, then development, then maturity.

The spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. —
1 *Corinthians* 15: 46.

Our King himself foretold that the wheat and the tares would grow together until the harvest. Accordingly, the day of Pentecost had hardly ended when Ananias and Sapphira entered into their awful agreement to lie to the Holy Spirit. What though Simon of Samaria was a “believer” and had been duly baptized? He thought he could acquire the gift of God with money, and so he undertook to bribe apostles. The very charisms or spiritual gifts of the apostolic period proved to be occasions of the most unseemly wranglings in the primitive church. To go back, then, to “The New Testament Church” as our model of church life is to slide back into the absurdest of moral retrogrades. Only one church is our perfect model; it is the ideal Church of the First-born, whose names are enrolled in heaven. But of this I am to speak later on.

Organized Churches a Necessity. — Meanwhile observe that, although we may not look back to the “apostolic church” as our perfect ecclesiastical model, yet ecclesiastical organizations of some kind or other are indispensable, and will continue indispensable at least while the present

æon lasts. Theorize as we may, the spirit cannot live in this world without the machinery of the body. Theorize as we may, the church, as the spiritual body of Christ, cannot carry on its divine functions without the machinery of human churches as ecclesiastical organizations. Accordingly, the great practical question of to-day is this, How shall we organize our churches? What shall be our ecclesiastical model? And so we come to the second part of our subject; The Church as a Modern Problem.



PART SECOND

THE CHURCH AS A MODERN PROBLEM



CHAPTER I

MISSION OF THE CHURCH

It will help to clarify our problem of church organization if we at the outset understand distinctly the mission of the church as an ecclesiastical organization. When we conceive clearly what the church ought to do, then we shall conceive clearly how the church ought to do it.

Mission of the Church. — What, then, is the mission of the church? It is a pertinent question to ask. Here is a colossal institution; an institution colossal in time, in space, in numbers, in wealth, in rank, in power, in scholarship, in resources of every kind. What, then, is the mission of this colossal institution?

Let me answer first negatively. It is not the mission of the church to enjoy herself. She is neither a dormitory, nor a junto, nor a library, nor a museum, nor an obelisk, nor a bureau, a treadmill, or a wailing-place.

Let me now answer affirmatively. It is the mission of the church to serve God by serving man. The church is a workshop, a teacher, a reformer, a peacemaker, an up-

builder; in brief, the church is God's agent in administering his kingdom on earth.

Success of the Church. — And the church is fulfilling in some measure her great mission. I am no pessimist. The Kingdom of God is not a failure. The church has been, still is, ever will be (till her King's return), the salt of the earth, the light of the world, the pillar and ground of the truth. Say what you will, the church is time's most beneficent institution. She is carrying on more or less largely her King's beneficent ministry, and never so largely as to-day. Behold, for example, what are called her "Institutional Churches"; thank God, they are multiplying all over Christendom. In fact, what is Christian history (history that is truly Christian) but a history of Christian charities? Who first illustrated the community of goods? Who organized the first diaconate? Who started the Antioch relief fund? Who instituted the mediæval charity orders? Who are at the head of modern charities? Who are the practical friends of the abandoned, the criminal, the dirty, the feeble-minded, the incurable, the lost? In brief, who is transfiguring mankind? The Church is time's great Eleemosynary Institution. Hers is the finger, often unnoticed, which is touching the springs whence arise our varied organizations of secular beneficence; our asylums, hospitals, refuges, reformatories, wayfarers' lodges, etc. Show me, if you can, Plato's Asylum for the Orphaned; Cæsar's Hospital for the Wounded; Voltaire's Infirmary for the Feeble-minded: Paine's Retreat for the Homeless; Ingersoll's Home for the Incurable. Thus, if I may say so, Christianity reverses Darwinism, selecting the unfittest for survival. Walk then about the Zion of the living God; tell

the towers of her successes ; mark well the bulwarks of her charities ; consider the palaces of her heroes ; that ye may tell it to the generations following.

Failure of the Church.— Nevertheless, the church, compared with her mission and resources, is a tragic failure. The world's population is, say, 1,200,000,000. Of these, say, 387,000,000 are Christian (Greeks, Latins, Protestants, etc.); and 813,000,000 are non-Christian (Brahmans, Moslems, Buddhists, etc.). Nearly two thousand years have elapsed since our King was born. Yet the church has gained hardly thirty per cent. Even of these a large proportion are still virtually heathen; look at our non-church-goers, "slums," etc.

Cause of the Church's Failure. — What then is the reason of the church's dismal failure? It is not because her resources are meagre ; on the one hand, she has all resources of human wealth, learning, philosophy, etc. ; on the other hand, she has all resources of divine promises, inspiration, omnipotence, etc. Why, then, has the church thus failed? It is because she has misconceived her own mission. She has misappropriated her resources, substituting her own methods for the divine. For example, she has substituted churchianity for Christianity; by-laws for constitution; machinery for spirituality; competition for coöperation; gardening for farming; refectory for reformatory; knowledge for wisdom; prejudgment for docility; resolutions for enterprises; rubric for service; symbols for essence; sects for unity; egoism for mankind; in short, herself for her Master. All which sad failure Chebar's prophet foreshadowed in his vision of the valley of dry bones.

How shall the Church fulfil her Mission? — How, then,

shall the church fulfil her august mission? It is a grave, profound, solemn question. Of course, I can only give some hints, and in this chapter only hints of a general kind.

By conceiving her Mission more clearly.—The church will fulfil her mission, first, by conceiving that mission more distinctly. Her mission is to upbuild as well as to rescue; to restore God's image in man; to realize the ideal man; to usher in God's kingdom; in short, to crown the Nazarene.

By readjusting her Methods.—Again, the church will fulfil her mission by readjusting her methods. Let her beware of submitting herself to the heathen law of the Medes and Persians which changes not. The church is not an iron groove; the church is a living tree. Accordingly, each age of the Christian era has its own mission and method. For example, there was the primitive age of Missions; the Athanasian age of Theology; the mediæval age of Scholasticism; the Lutheran age of Protestantism; the modern age of Science; we ourselves are living in the age of Christian service along "secular" or physical lines. Never let us forget our King's parable of the Wine-skins. It is both grotesque and uncomfortable to wear furs in summer and gossamers in winter. Listen to the dying Arthur:—

The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.

—TENNYSON'S *Morte d'Arthur*.

We must, for example, substitute to-day for yesterday; adjustment for tradition; witnessing for speculating; rally-

ing for scattering; ministering for officering; enthusiasm for exactitude; hospitality for prejudgment; forestalling for improvising; good news for dogma; common sense for castle-building; buttressing for criticising; beneficence for benevolence; "Kingdom" for churchism; in short, Christ for church. Thus, instead of the scattered bones of the Babylonian valley, behold the compact, serried, invincible Macedonian phalanx:—

Anon they move
In perfect phalanx, to the Dorian mood
Of flutes and soft recorders. — *Paradise Lost*.

By following Jesus as her Only Captain.—Once more, the church will fulfil her mission by following Jesus as her only Captain. Personal loyalty to him is the one essential test of the original Christianity. This unites the sects. Here is the main key to our problem—individual loyalty to Christ's person, Christ's words, Christ's character, Christ's example. What was that example? Comforting, feeding, healing, up-building, going about doing good, healing all that were oppressed by the Devil. Christianity is nothing if not generously executive.

The Forerunner's Query and the Fulfiller's Reply.—Recall a significant scene in our King's life. His forerunner was in prison, and sent to him two of his followers charged with the query:—

Art thou the Coming One, or are we to look for another?

— *Matthew 11:2*.

At the very hour John's messengers arrived, Jesus was engaged, as was his wont, in acts of mercy. Accordingly, to John's inquiry whether he was the expected Messiah, or was that Messiah yet to come? Jesus replied:—

Go, and report to John what ye hear and see ; blind men receive sight, lame walk, lepers are cleansed, deaf hear, dead are raised, poor men have good tidings preached to them. Happy is he, whoever finds no occasion of stumbling in me. — *Matthew 11 : 4-6 ; Luke 7 : 21-23.*

It is as though our King had said : —

“ John asks from me a reply in words ; I give him my reply in works. Go, tell John what you see me doing — healing the sick ; comforting the sorrowing ; helping the poor ; casting out demons. These and such as these are the credentials of my Messiahship. Happy is the man who is not scandalized by me, my mission, my methods ! ”

And Jesus Christ is still receiving embassies of inquiry. From the prisons of persecution, sickness, bereavement, disappointment, failure, unrest, honest scepticism — there is ever coming the inquiry, “ Art thou the promised Deliverer ; or is he yet to come ? ”

And Jesus Christ is still returning the same reply. His beneficent deeds are still his credentials. True, miracles have generally been regarded as his chief credentials. And so they were ; not however because they were miracles, but because they were wrought to relieve human suffering. Theology, liturgy, worship — each is excellent ; each in its own place is essential. But neither one of them, nor all of them together, can take the place of practical beneficence as the chief credential of Christianity. Let me go into some particulars.

First of all, Christ's answer to John's inquiry must be taken literally. Beware of always construing our King's words spirit-wise ; as though he meant only the morally blind, deaf, lame, leprous. Despite our notions of the spiritual life as being ethereal, we do as a matter of fact live in material bodies. Beware then of a piety which is

merely sentimental, evaporating itself away in emotional devotions which are as sterile as volatile.

A monk (so the story goes) came to Abbot Sylvanus in the convent of Sinai, and found the brothers at work, and said: "Why labor ye for the meat that perisheth? Martha was cumbered with much serving; but Mary chose the good part." The abbot said, "Give him a book to read, and put him in an empty cloister." About the ninth hour the brother looked out to see if he would be called out to dinner, and at last came to the abbot, and said, "Do not the brethren eat to-day?" "Yes," said the good father. "Why, then," asked the hungry saint, "was I not called?" Then quoth Abbot Sylvanus, "Thou art a spiritual man, and needest not our food; but we are carnal, and must eat, because we work; but thou hast chosen the better part." Whereat the monk was ashamed.

The Son of man was no Utopian. He knew that we must have food as well as truth. And therefore his Christianity did have its body side. Look at his miracles as well as at his teachings; in fact, his miracles were his teachings. Every one of them, except one, was a miracle of mercy. Can we hope to improve on our Master's method? True, we cannot work Christ's miracles. But we can have Christ's spirit. We cannot heal miraculously, but we can provide hospitals for healing slowly; we can provide hospitals even for the incurable. We cannot miraculously multiply loaves and fishes; but we can deal our bread to the hungry, clothe the naked, house the shelterless, create employment for the unemployed. We cannot preach good tidings to the poor in Christ's own matchless language; but we can interest the poor in Christ's salvation by making our houses of worship and our services and church appliances attractive to the very humblest. In brief, we must meet the secularist half-way, or rather stand by his side, with one hand offering to the

poor the gospel of work and with the other hand the gospel of grace.

All this implies more or less change in our method of church administration; for example, more commodious architecture for church entertainments, gymnasiums, reading-rooms, schools for instruction in writing, arithmetic, keeping accounts, sewing, physiology, and the like. So long as the church fails to supply such things, our young men will go to clubs, saloons, etc. Nor is it enough that the church takes care of her own poor; she is something greater than a Masonic Lodge; she must follow her Master everywhere, whatever the creed, or nationality, or wickedness. The church must recognize more distinctly, and apply more practically, the two great complementary principles of diversity of gifts and division of labor. In short, the church must secularize Christianity in order to Christianize secularity. So shall she have the same mind which was in Christ Jesus. So shall she "reach the masses."

But I hear an objection: "Suppose the church should pursue a policy so openly secular, would she not encourage idleness, thriftlessness, loss of self-respect, imposture?" That, I reply, would largely depend on the common sense of the almoner who distributes her bounty. Of course, he ought to be a man of sagacity. Because a man is a philanthropist, it does not follow that he must be a fool. As for imposture, has not the Lord of the Kingdom given us his parable of the Wheat and the Tares? Are we to refuse sowing wheat because thistle seeds are in the air? Did Jesus cease cleansing lepers because, having on one occasion cleansed ten, nine of them ungratefully forgot him?

I have dwelt thus long on this answer of our King to his forerunner because this answer is momentous, many-sided, timely. For the church is still largely spending her brains, her pens, her lungs, on technical questions of church order, liturgy, historic episcopate, relation of baptism to communion, etc. Of course, creed has its place—a great place it is. But creed is out of place when it stands between me and a suffering man. Go, ye sticklers for ecclesiastical technicalities, and learn what the prophet Hosea means when he says, “I desire mercy, and not sacrifice; practical sympathy, and not mere ritual.” Here is the point where the world is watching the church. Here is the real touchstone of Christianity.

What does it profit, my brethren, if any one say that he has faith, and have not works? Can the faith save him? If a brother or a sister be naked, and in lack of daily food, and one of you say to them, Go in peace, be warmed, and be filled, but ye give them not the things needful for the body, what does it profit? Even so faith, if it has not works, is dead in itself. — *James 2: 14-17.*

The time has come for us to listen to the apostle of justification by works as well as to the apostle of justification by faith. Not that James differs from Paul, except in the sense that the fruit differs from the root; the philosophic Paul saw in the root the fruit in embryo; the practical James saw in the fruit the root in evolution. So our King himself had said, “By their fruits ye shall know them.” And society recognizes the accuracy of the test. The church cannot deceive outsiders by professions. What churches have the strongest hold on the respect of outsiders? Not those who talk the most about their “experiences”; but those who, like our Saviour, go about doing

good, and healing all that are oppressed by the Devil. The Church of the Future is the Church of Action. The coming orthodoxy is the orthodoxy of faith working through love.

And in thus continuing the Christ's beneficent service the church is speaking a blessed parable. For what is the healing of bodies but a type of the healing of spirits? The spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. First bread, clothes, medicine, home for the poor in body; then bread, clothes, medicine, home for the poor in spirit. So Jesus did, and thus proved his Christhood; so we are to do, and thus prove that we are Christians. Happy the man who does not find in the secular ministry of Jesus an occasion of stumbling!

This much in a general way.

CHAPTER II

MODERN PROBLEM OF CHURCH ADJUSTMENTS

"Signs of the Times."—When it is evening ye say, Fair weather ! for the sky is red. And in the morning, A storm to-day ! for the sky is red and lowering.¹ Ye know how to discern the face of the sky, and can ye not the signs of the times? — *Matthew* 16 : 2, 3.

So, according to many manuscripts, some of them ancient, Jesus is reported as saying when in the region of Dalmanutha. But whether he actually said this or not, it is certain that the moral sky of Palestine was in his time thick with Messianic signs. On the one hand, there were signs of Messianic blessing; for example, Christ's own words, works, character, influence. On the other hand, there were signs of Messianic menace; for example, national degeneracy, false Christs, Roman overthrow. The Jews could discern the face of the weather sky; but they could not, because they would not, discern the signs of the moral weather. Secularly acute, they were spiritually obtuse. Jerusalem knew not the season of her visitation; and so the days came when her enemies shut her in on every side, and dashed her to the ground, and her children within her.

In like manner, we also are weather-wise, knowing how to discern the signs of the weather sky:—

When ye see a cloud rising in the west, straightway ye say, A shower is coming; and so it comes to pass. And when ye see a south wind

¹ Compare the proverbial saying; "Red sky at evening is the shepherd's delight; Red sky at morning is the shepherd's warning."

blowing, ye say, There will be a burning heat; and it comes to pass.
— *Luke 12 : 54, 55.*

Of all ages, ours is preëminently the “scientific age.” It is the age of the telescope, microscope, balance, reagents, analyses of all sorts—chemical, qualitative, quantitative, etc. But we are also morally obtuse, failing to discern the signs of the times:—

Hypocrites ! Ye know how to interpret the face of the earth and the sky; but how is it that ye know not how to interpret this time ? And why even of yourselves do ye not judge what is right ?—
Luke 12 : 56, 57.

For there is such a science as spiritual meteorology. There are celestial vanes, heavenly barometers, divine signals. What we call “providence” is in its way a Bible:—

Day unto day uttereth speech,
And night unto night sheweth knowledge. — *Psalms 19 : 2.*

If our true eyes were open, we would see signs enough. Our moral sky is also thick with Messianic signs. On the one hand, there are signs of Messianic blessing; for example, growth of the spiritualities—spiritual worship, service of character, missionary spirit, catholicity, etc. Dream we that the Golden Age is far, far away ?

Well I know
That unto him who works, and feels he works,
This same grand year is ever at the doors.

— TENNYSON'S *Golden Year.*

On the other hand, our moral sky is thick with signs of Messianic menace; for example, wars and rumors of wars, strikes, apostasies, false Christs, etc.

Little children, it is the last hour; and as we heard that antichrist is coming, even many antichrists have risen; whence we know that it is the last hour. — 1 *John* 2: 18.

These and such as these are some of the signs of the Messiah.

Yet how often the church fails to discern the signs of the times! We are swift to detect phenomena; but we are slow to discern elementals. We are dexterous with instruments of physical science—the microscope, balance, etc.; but we are awkward with instruments of spiritual science—conscience, faith, etc. Terrestrially acute, we are celestially obtuse. Were our risen King to return to earth, would he not again sigh deeply in his spirit?

Adjust Church to Signs.—What, then, are we to do? Adjust the church to the signs of the times. For the church, surveyed as a human organization, is a flexible institution. It is not an end; it is only a means to an end. Accordingly, the church, so far as its movements and appliances, or working polity, are concerned, is an adjustable affair. While its organic constitution is forever unalterable, its working by-laws are ever amendable. For we live in a world under the government of a living, unsleeping God, who has had his ideal from the beginning, and who, as the millenniums sweep on, bids mankind try to follow him as he strides on toward his goal. Accordingly, God's providences serve as tuitions or hints for the working plans of his people, having through the æons the freshness of perpetual spring. Jehovah God is wakening his church morning by morning, so that her ear shall hear as they that are taught, his new conditions summoning her to new duties. That is to say, the church is ever

to adjust her machinery to God's providences, or ever unfolding plan. Remember our King's parable of the fresh Wine-skins. The church is not a stationary flagstaff; the church is an advancing color-sergeant, a perpetual recon-naissance in force. Jehovah still speaks to the true Israel that they go forward.

New occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient good uncouth;
They must upward still, and onward, who would keep abreast of Truth;
Lo, before us gleam her camp-fires. We ourselves must Pilgrims be,
Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly through the desperate winter
sea,

Nor attempt the Future's portal with the Past's blood-rusted key.

—LOWELL'S *Present Crisis*.

Let us then watch the signs of the times; walking not as unwise, but as wise, buying up the opportunity. Let us imitate the apostle Paul; like him, let us adjust ourselves to God's ever changing circumstances; now circumcising Timothy, now refusing to circumcise Titus; here adopting the Congregational polity, there adopting the Presbyterian; in one case approving a certain amusement, in another case disapproving it; becoming all things to all men, that we may by all means save some. The church must be as watchful as the meteorologist. How the look-out on the steamer bridge scans the horizon! Does the church see signs of reef? Let her beware. Does she see signs of shore? Let her rejoice. In either case, let her adjust her sails to God's own winds.

CHAPTER III

MODERN PROBLEM OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

AND now to more specific details of the matter before us: The Church as a Modern Problem.

Modern Problem of Church Membership.—And, first, the modern problem of church-membership. Modern problem, I say; for to this day Christendom is more or less divided on the question of what should be the test or tests of church membership.

Primitive Test of Church Membership.—Although we may not look back to the primitive church for our perfect model of ecclesiastical organization, yet we may gather from it many a useful hint. What, then, was the test of membership in the primitive church? Not birthright; not sponsorship; not nationality; not wealth; not scholarship; not ritual; not theology. But conscious loyalty to the Kingdom of God. That is to say, the primitive condition of ecclesiastical membership was confessed allegiance to the King of kings, and practical obedience to all his mandates, however made known, whether in his words, his acts, or his life. The primitive standard of church entrance was neither dogma nor rite, but Christliness of purpose. This will be apparent when we simply recall some of the titles which the primitive members bore; for example, "Believers, disciples, followers, faithful, saints,

Christians, those of the Way," etc. Observe that in those early days no theological tests were required. There is no record that any candidate was asked, "Did you labor under a painful sense of personal sinfulness? Do you remember under what circumstances you experienced religion? What do you think about inspiration, total depravity, imputation, justification, the Trinity?" But the question was, "Have you made up your mind to follow Jesus Christ every day of your life?" For, as the Scripture says:—

If thou confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believes unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. — *Romans* 10:9, 10.

Modern Problem of Child Membership.—Observe also that in those primitive days the candidates for church membership were chiefly, if not altogether, adults; men and women trained in Judaism or in paganism. The new religion had not been long enough in the world to develop believing children of believing parents; the children were children of adult Jews or of adult pagans. Yet, according to our King, childlikeness is the very condition of entrance into his kingdom.

They brought little children to him, that he might touch them; and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus seeing it, was much displeased, and said to them, Suffer the little children to come to me; forbid them not; for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Verily I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, will in no wise enter therein. And he folded them in his arms and blessed them, putting his hands on them. — *Mark* 10:13-16.

Accordingly, the doctrine of infant conversion is profoundly philosophical. Observe, I do not say that the child

as such is sinless. But I do say that the spirit of childhood is the natural emblem of the Christian spirit. And just because this is true, little children are of all persons, the most likely to become Christians. As the author has tried to show in his work entitled *The Kingdom* (pp. 36-46), it is the very characteristics of the child-state — self-unconsciousness, trustfulness, guilelessness, conscientiousness, teachableness, obedience, faith, hope, love — which give to the little child a peculiar aptitude for the Kingdom of God. He does not have to unlearn long years of self-complacency, distrustfulness, craftiness, stubbornness, waywardness, selfishness, before he can enter the child-state; he is in the child-state already, and the child-state is prerequisite to the heavenly. To expect then the early conversion of children is, I repeat, profoundly philosophical; for it is in entire harmony with the very genius of Christianity. And the younger the child, the likelier the conversion. Our King has nowhere said to little children, "Except ye become as adults, ye cannot be saved." But our King *has* said to adults, "Except ye become as little children, ye can in no wise enter the Kingdom of God." How philosophical and thoroughly Christian St. Paul's confidence in the inherited piety of his beloved Timothy:—

Calling to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that it dwells in thee also. — 2 *Timothy* 1: 5.

In fact, the law of heredity is my real hope under God for the redemption of mankind. Recall the second commandment; while Jehovah visits the penalty of bad fathers upon their children to the third and fourth generation

of them that hate him, he visits the reward of good fathers upon their children to the thousandth generation of them that love him and keep his commandments. Not that these ordinals — third, fourth, thousandth — are to be taken with arithmetical exactitude; that would be idolatry of the letter: but they are to be taken in their moral dimensions; this would be recognition of the spirit. They set forth the gracious truth that mercy glories over judgment, or the unspeakable transcendence of goodness:—

Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the third and fourth generation of those who hate Jehovah, but showing mercy upon the thousandth generation of those who love Jehovah and keep his commandments.

— *Exodus* 20:6.

Precisely here, let me repeat, is my real hope for mankind. Let me apply the point to the missionary enterprise. The law of heredity is for me a real inspiration for foreign missions. Of course, it is our blessed duty to save all we possibly can of the heathen adults. But, after all, the true hope for the missionary cause, surveyed in its broadest and deepest scope, lies not in the conversion of adults, but in the conversion of children; for it is the children of this generation who are to be the ancestors of the coming generations, and will therefore shape the coming history. While, then, our missionaries must announce the glad tidings to the heathen adults, they must take special pains to save the heathen children; for converted children are, according to God's own law of heredity, the mighty hope of our world's future. I admit that this law has hitherto worked most disastrously. But I believe in God; I believe in his gracious purposes; I believe that he will redeem mankind; I believe that he

will redeem mankind in accordance with means; I believe that the means he will use in redeeming mankind is this same law of heredity. In other words, I believe in what Horace Bushnell quaintly calls "the out-populating power of the Christian stock." Taking into account the whole possible range of coming history, and remembering that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day, I firmly believe that the advantages of this law of heredity will yet vastly counterbalance its disadvantages, both present and past. And when the church of the living God shall fully awake to the conception of the tremendous resources of missionary victory latent in this law of heredity, and shall accordingly vastly multiply the number of those whom she sends forth to address themselves specifically to the work of saving heathen little children, thus putting the law of heredity on its merciful side into new and vigorous operation, then shall the missionary enterprise take a colossal stride forward, and nations shall be born in a day. The law of heredity is the right arm of the missionary cause. The family institution is the hope of the world.

And now emerges our problem, How far shall this little child element of Christianity be recognized in our church membership? Of course, I do not approve infant baptism, for it has no warrant in the New Testament. Neither do I approve the "half-way covenant" of our Puritan fathers; this encourages superficiality. But I do approve some kind of infant church membership. While I do not venture to suggest any precise polity here, I think we may gather rich suggestions from certain polities: for example, the polity of "probation," or testing of

time; the polity of "confirmation," or arrival at a certain age; etc. The main point in our problem here is this; How shall we duly recognize the piety of our little children?

Problem of "Moralist" Church Membership. — Another problem confronts the church of to-day which did not confront the primitive church; it is the problem of unrecognized disciples, or Christian outsiders. In those initial days, when Christendom was still in its incipient stage, when creeds had not been formulated, when everybody was either a Jew or a pagan, the passage from Judaism and paganism to Christianity was a conscious, positive experience; he who had made the passage knew whether he had become a Christian or not; his acquaintances knew it also. But Christianity is now the recognized religion; it is in some sense "the law of the land"; it permeates our moral atmosphere; the better portion of the community cannot help breathing less or more of its health-inspiring oxygen. Moreover, definite theological creeds or dogmas have been added to the primeval faith — dogmas often so precise and exacting that they fail to carry the intellectual consent of many real believers. Nevertheless, these very outsiders obey in their daily lives the mandates of our King; they are as conscientious, truthful, honest, generous as the most approved church members, and, were it needful, would die for their Lord. But, notwithstanding their Christian services and character, they have not joined our particular regiment; they do not march under our creedal flag. And so we call these good outsiders mere "moralists," declaring that they are trying to buy heaven with their own good works. The spirit of Elijah is still in the church; in this sense it is true that he has come again: —

Know ye not what the Scripture says in Elijah; how he intercedes with God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have killed thy prophets, have digged down thine altars, and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what says the answer of God to him? I have left to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to Baal. — *Romans* 11:2-4.

Do not let us be guilty of the unfaith of the disciples in failing to recognize incipient Christians, saying with them, "There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest." Let the Lord of the field be our authority here:—

Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and behold the fields, that they are already white for harvest.—*John* 4:35.

CHAPTER IV

MODERN PROBLEM OF BAPTISM

ANOTHER problem of the modern church is the problem of Baptism. And it is really a modern problem, less or more dividing Christendom.

Baptism no Problem to the Primitive Church. — Not that baptism was any problem to the primitive church. To them the word *baptize* meant only one thing; “baptize” meant “immerse.” Observe: the question before us is not what baptism has come to mean in our day; the question before us is what did baptism mean nineteen hundred years ago? We have no right to inject a modern meaning into an ancient word, and then declare that the modern meaning is the same as the original meaning. Suppose English had been the language of Palestine in our King’s time; what right would Christendom have to change the original “immerse” into the modern “sprinkle”? No, baptism was no problem to the primitive church.

Baptism a Modern Church Problem. — And here emerges a problem for the modern church: Has the modern church the right to change the primitive mode of baptism?

The Non-Baptist Answer. — On the one hand, non-Baptists answer, “Yes.” Much can be said on that side. Let me illustrate by a reference to the primitive custom of foot-washing. The story of our King’s washing his disciples’

feet the last night he was on earth as a suffering man is so pathetic that I must transcribe it in full : —

Christ's Washing his Disciples' Feet. — Knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he came forth from God, and was going to God, he rises from the supper, and lays aside his garments, and taking a towel he girded himself. Then he pours water into the basin, and began to wash the feet of his disciples, and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded.

So he comes to Simon Peter ; he says to him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said to him, What I am doing thou knowest not now ; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter says to him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter says to him, Lord, not my feet only, but also the hands and the head. Jesus says to him, He that has bathed has no need except to wash the feet, but is wholly clean. And ye are clean ; but not all. For he knew his betrayer ; on this account he said, Ye are not all clean.

So when he had washed their feet, and taken his garments, and reclined again at table, he said to them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me the Teacher, and the Lord ; and ye say well, for so I am. If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I gave you an example, that as I did to you, ye also should do. Verily, verily, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his lord, nor one that is sent greater than he who sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. — *John 13 : 3-17.*

Did our King then intend that feet-washing should be a permanent custom for his church? Observe the positiveness of his language : —

If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I gave you an example, that as I did to you, ye also should do. — *John 13 : 14, 15.*

In like manner the apostle Paul, some thirty years afterward, in laying down the qualifications for a certain order of women in the ancient church, directs : —

Let no one be enrolled as a widow under sixty years old, the wife of one husband, well reported of for good works, if she brought up children, if she lodged strangers, if she washed saints' feet, if she relieved afflicted ones, if she diligently followed every good work. — 1 *Timothy* 5 : 9, 10.

All this looks as though our King meant that feet-washing should be one of the permanent customs of his church. Accordingly, there have been in every age of the church those who felt that Christ's example and words in the pass-over room should be followed literally ; for instance, the Greek convents, the Anabaptists, the Mennonites, the Tunkers, etc.

Yet the great body of the church from the beginning has felt that our King did not mean feet-washing for a universal and abiding ordinance. And in thus feeling she has unconsciously illustrated the great principle of the right of judgment, or, to use a modern and much-abused term, the great principle of "rationalism," that is, reasoning. The church has exercised her right of reason in discriminating between what are called the "ordinances." For so far as the letter of Scripture goes, Feet-washing is as positive an "ordinance" as is Baptism or Supper ; language could not be more explicit or decisive than his words in the guest-chamber : —

So when he had washed their feet, and taken his garments, and reclined again at table, he said to them, Know ye what I have done to you ? Ye call me the Teacher, and the Lord ; and ye say well, for so I am. If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I gave you an example, that as I did to you, ye also should do. Verily, verily, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his lord, nor one that is sent greater than he who sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. — *John* 13 : 12-17.

But the church has exercised here, and as I think justly, the right of judging, or, to use another modern phrase, "the critical faculty," discriminating between what seemed to be local and transient and what is universal and abiding. In other words, she has obeyed the instincts of what she felt to be propriety. Feet-washing was purely a local custom, growing out of peculiarities of climate and dress, and significant only to people living in eastern tropical lands. Were feet-washing on entering the house after a walk as constant a usage of universal society as it was of Jewish, then I do not see how we could escape the conclusion that our King did mean that this custom should be a permanent "ordinance" in his church.

A hint in passing. The act of our King in washing his disciples' feet suggests a fine instance of the duty of looking through the letter into the spirit, through the form into the substance, through the incidental into the essential. When we reverse this process—when we allow ourselves to become engrossed in the letter—the danger is that we shall lose the spirit. But when we penetrate into the spirit hidden in the letter—when the spirit of the precept becomes a part of our inmost feeling and character—then our obedience becomes genuine and profound. A literal obedience to the precept of feet-washing in a country where it is not already one of the usages of society is almost sure to defeat its own end, fostering pride instead of meekness. Witness the stately pageant with which the Pope on Maunday-Thursday summons twelve poor men before him, and, sprinkling a few drops on the right foot of each, professes to wipe and kiss it. As the pithy Bengel says, "It would be a more admirable thing to wash with unaffected

humility the feet of one king than the feet of twelve paupers." So much easier it is to obey the letter of a command than its spirit. Well, then, it is that the church as a body has not recognized feet-washing as one of her ordinances:—

It is a custom
More honor'd in the breach than the observance.

—*Hamlet*, I, 4.

To quote a fine saying of Claudius touching ceremonies which have become void; "They are little flags, floating above the surface of the waters, and marking where a richly freighted ship hath sunk." Let us then here, as everywhere else, distinguish between the letter and the spirit, between the incidental and the essential; for the incidental is ephemeral, the essential is eternal.

But to return to the query under consideration: Has the church the right to change the primitive mode of baptism? The vast majority of Christ's people, regarding baptism, like feet-washing, a matter of climate and Oriental custom, have felt that they did have the right to substitute affusion or sprinkling for the original immersion. I think that the point has been fairly taken, and that, as in the case of disregarding the custom of feet-washing, a great deal can be said in favor of changing immersion into affusion. It is neither manly nor Christian to denounce the vast majority of our fellow-Christians, whose convictions are as conscientious as our own, for being, as we often hotly allege, "disloyal" to our common Lord Jesus Christ.

Nevertheless, conceding that our brethren may have the right to substitute modern affusion for ancient immersion,

I must insist, with all kindness, yet with all firmness, that it is but honest for our non-Baptist friends to cease representing affusion or sprinkling as meaning the same thing as baptizing. We have no right to inject a nineteenth-century meaning into a first-century word. We have the right, if we choose, to substitute an Oriental sandal for an Occidental hat; but we have no right to assert that the Oriental sandal is an Occidental hat, or that the Occidental hat is an Oriental sandal. Our non-Baptists may have the right to change "immerse" into "sprinkle"; but let them frankly and bravely admit that they *have* changed it. The best way to help truth is to tell truth.

The Baptist Answer.—On the other hand, in answering the question, "Have we the right to change the primitive mode of baptism?" Baptists answer, "No." For recall how much Christian baptism symbolized to the primitive church. It symbolized, for example, the primitive Christian's belief in the death and resurrection of his King; thus Paul to the Christians in Colosse:—

Having been buried with him in our baptism, wherein we were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.—*Colossians 2: 12.*

Again, baptism symbolized to the primitive Christian his own death to sin and his own resurrection to righteousness; thus Paul to the Christians in Rome:—

Are ye ignorant, that all who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him through the baptism into his death; that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life.—*Romans 6: 3, 4.*

Again, baptism symbolized to the primitive Christian his sense of defilement and his desire for purification; thus Ananias of Damascus to Saul of Tarsus:—

And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on his name.—*Acts 22: 16.*

Again, baptism symbolized to the primitive Christian his belief in his own coming resurrection and immortality; thus Paul again to the Christians in Rome:—

If we have become united with the likeness of his death, we shall be with that of his resurrection also.—*Romans 6: 5.*

In sum, baptism symbolized to the primitive Christian his belief that he was invested or clothed with Christ's character; thus Paul to the Christians in Galatia:—

All ye who were baptized into Christ, did put on Christ.—*Galatians 3: 27.*

How sadly all this rich symbolism of the ancient baptism is missed when we substitute pouring or sprinkling for immersing! If "baptize" meant in the primitive church both "immerse" and "sprinkle," we have, of course, the right to translate "baptize" into "immerse" or into "sprinkle." Let me then present certain baptismal Scriptures in parallel columns, using "immerse" in one column, and "sprinkle" in the other, and then, without one word of comment on my part, simply ask the reader which column presents the better sense.

They were immersed by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.—<i>Matthew 3: 6.</i>	They were sprinkled by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.—<i>Matthew 3: 6.</i>
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I indeed immerse you in water unto repentance; but he that comes after me is mightier than I; he will	I indeed sprinkle you in water unto repentance; but he that comes after me is mightier than I; he will
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immerse you in the Holy Spirit and fire. — *Matthew 3: 2.*

Having been immersed, Jesus came up straightway from the water. — *Matthew 3: 16.*

Are ye able to be immersed the immersion that I am immersed? — *Mark 10: 38.*

John was also immersing in Enon near Salim, because there was much water there; and they came, and were immersed. — *John 3: 23.*

As they went along the way, they came to a certain water. And the eunuch says, Behold, here is water; what forbids my being immersed? And he commanded the chariot to stand still. And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he immersed him. — *Acts 8: 36-38.*

Arise, and be immersed and wash away thy sins, calling on his name. — *Acts 22: 16.*

All we who were immersed into Christ Jesus were immersed into his death. We were buried therefore with him through the immersion into his death; that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. — *Romans 6: 3, 4.*

Our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all immersed into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. — *I Corinthians 10: 1, 2.*

sprinkle you in the Holy Spirit and fire. — *Matthew 3: 2.*

Having been sprinkled, Jesus came up straightway from the water. — *Matthew 3: 16.*

Are ye able to be sprinkled the sprinkling that I am sprinkled? — *Mark 10: 38.*

John was also sprinkling in Enon near Salim, because there was much water there; and they came, and were sprinkled. — *John 3: 23.*

As they went along the way, they came to a certain water. And the eunuch says, Behold, here is water; what forbids my being sprinkled? And he commanded the chariot to stand still. And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he sprinkled him. — *Acts 8: 36-38.*

Arise, and be sprinkled and wash away thy sins, calling on his name. — *Acts 22: 16.*

All we who were sprinkled into Christ Jesus were sprinkled into his death. We were buried therefore with him through the sprinkling into his death; that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. — *Romans 6: 3, 4.*

Our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all sprinkled into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. — *I Corinthians 10: 1, 2.*

All ye who were immersed into Christ, did put on Christ. — *Galatians* 3 : 27.

Buried with him in your immersion, wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. — *Colossians* 2 : 12.

All ye who were sprinkled into Christ, did put on Christ. — *Galatians* 3 : 27.

Buried with him in your sprinkling, wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. — *Colossians* 2 : 12.

Comparing these two columns, which gives the better, more significant sense? Which brings out the more clearly the ancient symbolism of baptism? How beautifully this ancient symbolism of baptism is expressed in the Collect for Easter-Even in the Prayer-book of our Episcopal brethren : —

Grant, O Lord, that as we are baptized into the death of thy blessed Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, so by continual mortifying our corrupt affections we may be buried with him; and that through the grave, and gate of death, we may pass to our joyful resurrection; for his merits who died, and was buried, and rose again for us, Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. — *Collect for Easter-Even.*

What a glorious symbol baptism was of the primitive Christian's creed! What right then has the church to ignore the symbolism of the primitive baptism, diluting meaningful immersion into meaningless sprinkling? The church has no more right to change a divine symbol than to change a divine command. When did our King authorize his church to revoke his "ordinance" of baptism, his symbolism of immersion? She cannot plead here the ancient custom of feet-washing as a parallel case. Feet-washing was a purely local custom, founded on circumstances of climate and costume, significant only to those who lived in Eastern tropical lands. On the other hand,

whether Christ's people live in the tropics or in the arctics, it is proper and needful that they should set forth their belief in the death and resurrection of their King; their own death to sin and resurrection to righteousness; their own sense of defilement and longing for purification; their faith in their own coming resurrection and immortality. Hence baptism is founded on universal and abiding instincts of the church; instincts as strong in Greenland as in Sumatra, in the twentieth century as in the first. Accordingly, as Protestants protest against the perversions involved in Romanism, so Baptists protest against the perversions involved in affusion or sprinkling. Had the church remained true to the profound moral symbolism involved in the original mode of Christian baptism, she had escaped the perversions involved in hereditary church membership, Pedobaptism, and the like. For Baptists insist on conscious personal faith in Christ as prerequisite to baptism. Hence they oppose, not infant dedication, but infant baptism, rejecting all notions of hereditary membership, etc. Thus the insistence of the Baptists on retaining immersion as the primitive mode of Christian baptism is neither technical nor speculative; it is fundamental.

A Non-Baptist Irenicon. — It is a day of Christian irenicons. Christians of all branches of Christ's one church are asking, "How shall the sad disputes which divide Christendom be abolished?" In large measure, I answer, by the church's returning to the primitive mode of baptism. In doing this, the church would surrender no principles; for her authoritative scholars cheerfully admit that immersion was the apostolic mode of baptism. Her

return to the original mode would bring to Christendom unspeakable blessings. For example: it would recover a prime but comparatively lost symbol, for immersion presents Christianity in epitome, symbolizing Christ's death and resurrection, the Christian's purification from sin, his belief in a personal immortality, etc. Again, it would remove a tremendous stumbling-block from four millions of Christ's people; for, while with non-Baptists the mode of baptism is largely a matter of æsthetics, convenience, expediency, and the like; with Baptists it is a grave matter of conscience, or, as they believe, loyalty to God's own word. Once more, it would seize a majestic opportunity for a genuine irenicon; for there could be no rallying point for Christendom more inspiring than the return of the church to a primitive custom as commanded by her King, and as administered by his apostles. For, as we have seen, baptism, administered as a symbol, is the gospel of the Kingdom embodied in visible, blessed action. Substitute any other mode for the original immersion, and we substitute a human device for the divine command, heresy for orthodoxy, secessionism for loyalty. Accept baptism as a symbol, preach it as a symbol, administer it as a symbol; it will sweep forth conquering and to conquer, until there shall be but one flock, as already there is but one Shepherd. "IN HOC SIGNO VINCES."

CHAPTER V

MODERN PROBLEM OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Need of Special Candor. —The Lord's Supper is the holy of holies in the temple of the new covenant, the culminating service in the Christian liturgy. Yet, strange to say, no service in the Christian liturgy has been the occasion of more frequent and bitter disputes. Accordingly, in studying it, it becomes us to proceed with special candor, carefulness, reverence. All depends on our starting-point. Do we start as champions of a particular custom, or as inquirers into what the original custom was? Do we start as members of a denominational church, or as members of the Christian church? The question before us is not what the Lord's Supper has come to mean to us in our day; our question is what did the Lord's Supper mean to the disciples who first partook of it in the ancient guest-chamber? Dismissing then, so far as we can, all memories of the disputes which have sprung up around the holy symbol, let us go back to the Jerusalem of nearly two millenniums ago, and, wending our way with the King and his twelve to the appointed guest-chamber, let us reverently gaze on the little band as they celebrate for the first time the Christian supper of the new covenant.

The Original Supper. —Combining the various accounts of the original Supper into one narrative, we have the following record:—

And as they were eating [the passover supper], Jesus took a loaf and blessed, and broke, and gave to the disciples, and said, Take. eat;

this is my body which is given for you ; this do in remembrance of me. And taking a cup, in like manner after they had supped, he gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink of it, all of you. For this cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is shed for you, and for many, unto remission of sins ; this do, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. And they all drank of it. Verily, I say to you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you, in the kingdom of my Father. — *Matthew* 26: 27-29; *Mark* 14: 23-25; *Luke* 22: 20; *1 Corinthians* 11: 23-25.

Simplicity of the First Christian Supper. — Such is the original record of our King's celebration of the Supper which bears his name. How striking its simplicity ! Here is no elaborate ceremonial, no stately pageantry, no formal prescription of time, place, administrator, participant. Not one word is hinted about baptism or any other rite being a prerequisite. The command is simply this : " Do this in remembrance of me." How painful the contrast of the subsequent parasitic growths of an elaborated ecclesiasticism, issuing in bitter disputes about time, place, form, purpose, meaning, qualification ; thus overturning Jesus' altar of love, and rearing in its place Satan's babel of hate. It is well that we have simply read the original records bearing on this matter, and gazed upon the monument of the Supper as our King himself reared it in its original, majestic simplicity. The Lord's Supper — what is it but Christ's transfiguration of a Hebrew banquet ? The Holy Communion — what is it but Christ's spiritualization of a material meal ?

SECTION I. — DESIGN OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Lord's Supper a Commemorative Rite. — But what is the design of the Lord's Supper ? If any one has the

right to state the design of an institution, it is the person who founds that institution. Listen then to our King as he himself states the purpose of his own institution of the Christian Supper: "This do in (e's, for, unto) remembrance of me." So important is this point that our King gives the command twice (Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24, 25).

Here, then, is the primary and controlling meaning of the Christian Supper. Our King appointed it to help forgetful, feeble, discouraged, doubting Christians to remember himself. As such, the Lord's Supper is a means of grace; it helps our body-invested spirits to mount heavenward. "Remembering Jesus" is the end; "doing this" is the means. Had the church always been loyal to the King here, always simply content with obeying his simple command, "This do in remembrance of me," what endless and bitter disputes — theological and ecclesiastical strifes about "transubstantiation," "prerequisites," etc. — would have been avoided. Remembering Jesus is the salient point in the Holy Communion, all else must fall into line with it. Ever keep in mind the clew-thread as our King himself has twice given it: "This do in remembrance of me."

The Supper a Communion with Christ. — Well, then, may we call the Lord's Supper the "Communion" (that is, communion with Christ), and those who partake of it "communicants" (that is, communicants in Christ): —

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a partaking of the blood of Christ? The loaf which we break, is it not a partaking of the body of Christ? — 1 *Corinthians* 10:16.

The Supper an Intercommunion with Christians. — And general communion with Christians naturally flows from individual communion with Christ: —

We, the many, are one loaf, one body ; for we all share in the one loaf.
— 1 *Corinthians* 10:17.

What though the Lord's Supper is a personal duty and privilege, meant for Christians as Christians? Communion with Christ who is the head, does involve intercommunion of Christians who are his body. And this intercommunion of Christians involved in their communion with Christ is richly symbolized in the one broken loaf. Many crumbs, but one Loaf; many stones, but one Temple; many branches, but one Vine; many children, but one Father; many members, but one Body; many sons of the Kingdom, but one King; many Christians, but one Christ.

SECTION II.—QUALIFICATION FOR THE LORD'S SUPPER

Christian Character the Qualification.—But who are to have the privilege of partaking of this sacred banquet? And so we pass to study the qualification for the Lord's Supper. This qualification is Christian character.

Christian Character involves Regeneration.—Christian character involves two chief elements. First, it presupposes a new birth, or Christ's entering into the soul: "Christ in you." Accordingly, since the Lord's Supper symbolizes personal communion with Christ, no one has the right to symbolize this communion who is not himself a Christian. We do not come to the Lord's table in order to become Christians; but we trust we have become Christians, and therefore it is our privilege to come to the Lord's table.

And Spiritual Growth.—But Christian character presupposes not only regeneration, or Christ's entry into the soul; Christian character also involves growth of the

indwelling Christ: "Until Christ be formed in you." For we are not only to absorb Christ inwardly; we are also to assimilate Christ structurally. And this, as we have seen, is richly symbolized in the Holy Communion:—

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a partaking of the blood of Christ? The loaf which we break, is it not a partaking of the body of Christ?—1 *Corinthians* 10: 16.

For Christ's flesh, or personality, is the true bread; Christ's blood, or self-sacrifice, is the true wine. Accordingly, while we need to have Christ enter us but once, and therefore to be baptized but once, we do need Christ's constant indwelling, and therefore frequent communions with Christ. No one, then, has the right to come to the Lord's table who does not give evidence of having an indwelling, ingrowing Christ. Hence St. Paul's injunction:—

Let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup.—1 *Corinthians* 11: 28.

Each man is to try his own self, whether he is really a Christian in his own beliefs, words, acts, habits, aims, feelings, character. So shall he keep the true Passover, cleansing out the old leaven, that he may become a new mass, even as he himself is unleavened.

In brief, the Lord's table is for the Lord's people. But this prerequisite of Christian character is so universally admitted by the Lord's people that it is needless to dwell on it farther.

SECTION III.—MODERN PROBLEM OF ECCLESIASTICAL COMMUNION

Modern Problem of Church Communion.—And here emerges the great problem of ecclesiastical communion, or

the Lord's Supper considered as a "church ordinance." "Modern," I say; for on the night our King instituted the feast which bears his name, there was no church in the ecclesiastical sense of the word; much less were there any denominations; hence the question of interdenominational communion could not have been raised. But the Christendom of to-day is divided into numerous denominations, each denomination claiming that its own particular branch of Christ's church is based on the primitive, apostolic model of the "New Testament Church." Hence the problem of ecclesiastical, interdenominational communion is really a modern problem.

Statement of our Problem.—The problem before us is this: Ought the church to be content with demanding Christian character as the prerequisite to the Lord's Supper? Or ought the church to add baptism as another prerequisite? The problem is not only modern, it is also gravely serious. Hence we ought to study the problem with conscientious care and candor; for, as we shall see, a great deal can justly be said on both sides of the grave question.

Beware of Hereditary Assumptions.—First of all, we must beware of allowing ourselves to be misled by traditional, hereditary assumptions. The fact is, there is a great deal of unconsciously assumptive, magisterial talk about this grave matter, resulting from our habit of accepting venerable denominational traditions as though these traditions were themselves divine Scriptures. For example:—

"*Baptism a Prerequisite to Communion.*"—It is assumed that baptism was a prerequisite to the first Supper. If the reader knows this was so, let him kindly cite the exact

Scripture, giving the book, the chapter, the verse. No doubt the apostles had been baptized before they partook of the first Lord's Supper. But that baptism was not Christian baptism. That baptism was John's baptism of repentance unto remission of sins. The Baptizer did not say a single word about baptizing into the name of the Father and the Son and the Spirit; he did not say a single word about baptizing into the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In fact, Christian baptism was not instituted till after the institution of the Supper; indeed, it could hardly have been understood by the apostles as symbolizing Christ's death and resurrection, until Christ himself had died and risen again; even when he had risen, they could hardly be persuaded to believe it. Moreover, when Paul, a score of years after Christ's resurrection, learned that certain disciples in Ephesus had been baptized only into John's baptism of repentance, he required that these same disciples should be baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. If John's baptism unto repentance was the same as the apostolic baptism into Christ's death and resurrection, I again ask for the precise Scripture, mentioning book, chapter, verse.

"The Lord's Supper a Church Ordinance." — Again, it is assumed that the Lord's Supper was a "church ordinance." Beware of this word "ordinance." It is not a Christian word; it is a Mosaic word; and, according to Paul, Christ by his own death abolished the ordinances, the commandments expressed in decrees, nailing them to his cross. This abolition of the Mosaic ordinances is the theme of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Jesus himself, although a King, did not use the noun "ordinance" once. Besides,

how many "ordinances" are there? "Two," answer Baptists; "Seven," answer Romanists; "None," answer Quakers. It is easier to obey ordinances than to obey principles; ordinances depend on contingencies, principles depend on character; ordinances go, principles stay; ecclesia dies, Basileia lives. If the Lord's Supper was a "church ordinance," let the reader cite the Scripture, mentioning book, chapter, verse.

"Apostles were Church Members." — Once more, it is assumed that the apostles were already "church members" on the night of the first Communion. Whereas, as we have seen, there was no "church" in the ecclesiastic and technical sense of the term, until considerable time after the day of Pentecost. Into what "church" did Paul baptize Lydia of heathen Philippi? Into what "church" did Philip baptize the Ethiopian eunuch on the desert-way from Jerusalem to Gaza? Into what "church" did John the forerunner baptize Jesus the fulfiller? The apostles did not "baptize into the fellowship" of any human ecclesia; the apostles baptized into the fellowship of God's spiritual Basileia.

Such are some of the hereditary, traditional assumptions in the matter of the Communion question. Yet these and kindred traditional assumptions are the main source of our unseemly disputes about the Lord's Supper. It is a serious thing to "unchurch," or deny Christ's communion to, the overwhelming majority of our Christian comrades in the Kingdom of God. Before undertaking this serious task, we ought to be able to cite specific Scriptures. A ceaseless oracular "Thus saith the Lord" will not satisfy the exegete, the logician, the true disciple. The exact

Scripture must be cited, giving book, chapter, verse. Man's assumptions are not God's Scriptures. It is well, then, that we have gone back to the ancient guest-chamber, and noted the absolute silence of Holy Scripture concerning baptism as a prerequisite to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper a Christian Privilege. — Recall then again the design of the Lord's Supper. The design was not to "observe a church ordinance"; or to "protest against false baptisms"; or to keep out "unworthy characters"; or to "maintain etymological scholarship"; or to "preserve the church as a denominational institution." Beware of adding to or subtracting from the Book of God. But the design of the Lord's Supper is to help us to remember our Saviour-King; "Do this in remembrance of me." May not a confirmed invalid, converted to Christ on her bed of illness, but too ill to be baptized, "remember" her Saviour in the way her King has bidden? May not a heroic missionary, struggling alone to rear his King's banner on the ramparts of heathenism, "remember" his King as he sits down to rest in his solitary walk from village to village? Kindly mention the Scripture, the book, the chapter, the verse, wherein our King has said to his people: —

"My memorial feast is a church ordinance; whenever you happen to number a hundred, or fifty, or twenty-five, or ten, or five baptized church members present, you may have the privilege of remembering me in my memorial emblems. But if you should be so unfortunate as to be sick in your chamber, or living alone in a wilderness, you have no right to remember me in the way I have appointed."

Where is the historic evidence that when the pentecostal disciples daily broke bread at their homes, partaking of

their food with gladness and singleness of heart, they partook only as church members? The truth is, the Lord's Supper is not so much an ecclesiastical, public rite as it is a personal, private privilege. As I was baptized into Christ, not as a church member, but as a Christian, so I remember Christ in his Supper, not as a church member, but as a Christian.

Sense in which Church Communion may be a Church Ordinance. — Not that church members have no right to commune with Christ as a church. If an individual Christian has the right to remember Christ in his memorials, certainly a church of Christians has the same right. And each church has of course the right to make its own rules, provided these rules are in harmony with the words and spirit of our King. As a matter of fact, it has long been and still is the custom of almost all Christian sects to demand baptism as a prerequisite to communion. And here let me say a few words in defence of the Baptists. While so many Christians hold what Baptists deem false notions touching the mode of baptism, Baptists are probably right in requiring immersion as a qualification for church communion; but only as a formal, technical qualification, and this in order to protest against what they regard as spurious baptisms, maintain vigor of denominational life, etc. True, non-Baptists complain of the lack of comity among Baptists in this matter of the Lord's Supper, because while non-Baptists admit Baptists to their communion, Baptists do not admit non-Baptists to theirs. But the comity of non-Baptists is not so much in the matter of communion as it is in the matter of baptism. In fact, non-Baptists are as much "close communionists" as Baptists

are; for non-Baptists will not as a rule admit to their communion those whom they do not deem to have been baptized. Indeed, it is non-Baptists, not Baptists, who are in this matter "uncharitable"; for, while they generally invite to their table only those whom they regard as having been baptized, they insist that Baptists shall be more generous than they themselves are, and invite to their table those whom Baptists are conscientiously compelled to regard as unbaptized. What the Episcopate is to Episcopalians, that Baptism is to Baptists. As the "Historic Episcopate" denies the official parity of the Baptist ministry, because "unconsecrated," so Baptists deny ecclesiastical communion to non-Baptists, because "unbaptized." Baptists are no more "uncharitable" here than non-Baptists.

But to return to the point under immediate consideration, namely, the right of a church to restrict the communion to the baptized. While claiming this right, let each church bravely put "close communion" on its own ground. Let Baptists honestly admit that their barriers *are* ecclesiastical, reared by themselves in order to self-preservation. If a non-communicant asks Baptists, "On what ground do you require baptism as preliminary to communion?" let them candidly answer, "Not on the ground of divine Scriptures, but on the ground of human necessities." For example; on the ground of propriety. As it is comely to wash our hands before eating, so it is comely to symbolize "the mystical washing away of sin" before communing with the Shining One. Accordingly, when the three thousand welcomed Peter's pentecostal testimony, they were baptized, constantly attending on the teaching of the apos-

tles, the distribution, the breaking of bread, and the prayers (Acts 2:41, 42). Let all things be done becomingly and in order. Both propriety and expediency (which is often a high kind of necessity) demand baptism as a prerequisite to communion.

Baptism only a Technical Prerequisite to Communion.

—But a church ordinance is not necessarily Christ's command. Our King himself is the only decisive authority in the matter of qualifications for the communion; and he did not utter or hint one word about baptism as preliminary to communion. A church or a denomination may make baptism a prerequisite to communion; but it can be only a formal, modal, technical, ecclesiastical qualification. Christian character is the moral prerequisite; baptism is the ritual prerequisite. Our King gives the moral right to his Supper; a church gives a technical right. And surely the moral right is more important than any technical right. Why then thrust a technical prerequisite into the foreground? Why make a ritual qualification more conspicuous than the moral? Why wound the consciences of any of our Father's children and our brothers in his kingdom, however "weak," by claiming the authority of a divine *dixit* for baptism as a prerequisite to communion, when after all the authority is only a human inference, and which, because human, may possibly be erroneous? Let us not be guilty of John's spirit of exclusiveness:—

Master, we saw one casting out demons in thy name; and we forbade him, because he follows not with us. And Jesus said to him, Forbid him not; for he that is not against you is for you. — *Luke* 9:49, 50.

Let us not exclude our fellow-Christians, and then profess to quote our Lord himself, saying, "Thus saith the Lord,"

although we are unable to cite the verse, the chapter, the book, wherein occurs this alleged "Thus saith the Lord." Let us beware of substituting argument for charity; for the same kind of "logic" which forbids communion to the "unbaptized" also forbids exchange of pulpits to the "unordained." Let us beware of being loyal in letter but disloyal in spirit; for instance, admitting gossipers to the communion, but rejecting heroines; degrading communion with Christ into polemic against Christians; debasing Christ's love-feasts into man's self-feasts; substituting anise and cummin and dill for justice and mercy and love; straining out gnats, yet swallowing camels. Let us beware of falling into Peter's sin in Antioch, refusing to eat with the "Gentiles," drawing back and separating ourselves, fearing those who are of the circumcision. Rather let us follow Peter at Cæsarea, saying with him:—

Truly I perceive that God is not a respecter of persons: but in every nation he that fears him, and works righteousness, is acceptable to him.
— *Acts* 10: 34, 35.

Heterodoxy here is an error rather than a sin, a ritual mistake rather than a moral misdemeanor. Even ancient Hezekiah may teach us a lesson at this point. When he issued his proclamation inviting all the tribes of Israel from Dan to Beersheba to come up to Jerusalem to keep the passover, a vast multitude responded. But many of them, especially those of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh and Issachar and Zebulun, had not duly cleansed themselves, and so they ate of the passover otherwise than it was written; but the considerate king prayed for them, saying:—

The good Lord pardon every one that sets his heart to seek God, Jehovah, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary. — 2 *Chronicles* 30 : 1-20.

Ritual is good ; but character is better.¹

If we presume to invite our fellow-Christians at all, let us invite them to the Lord's table, not to our own. Let us decline the post of picket, and leave the responsibility where it belongs, with the listener himself, exercising the love which imputes no evil. Instead of parading baptism as a prerequisite to communion, let us faithfully preach baptism itself : not as a Greek etymon, but as a moral emblem ; not as a mode, but as a meaning ; not as a shib-

¹ The author is a Baptist, as his revered ancestors were, and he glories in the fact. Of course, he foresees warm objections that will be urged against his position by some of his beloved denominational brethren ; and it is proper that he should answer them. But rather than thrust his own personality into the main text, he states and answers these objections in a foot-note.

Objection first : " You are unscriptural, disobeying a ' Thus saith the Lord. ' " Answer : What a " Thus saith the Lord " have I disobeyed.

Objection second : " You are disloyal to our King. " Answer : Wherein have I been disloyal to our King ? What command of his have I disobeyed ? Is not disobedience to the *spirit* of Christ the real disloyalty ?

Objection third : " You are weakening our great Baptist denomination. " Answer : Great as our Baptist denomination confessedly is (and no one is prouder of it than I am), the Kingdom of God is larger than any denomination however great ; the Church of God is greater than any church of man.

Objection fourth : " You are not a Baptist. " Answer : I am content to be in the company of such Baptists as John Bunyan, Robert Hall, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, Alexander Maclaren, etc.

Objection fifth : " You are weak-kneed, lacking stiffness of vertebral column. " Answer : So did the enemies of the apostle Paul intimate in his case. He himself admits : " To the Jew I became as a Jew, that I might gain Jews ; to those under law, as under law, not being myself under law, that I might gain those under law, as without law (not being without law to God, but under law to Christ), that I might gain those without law. To the weak I became weak, that I might gain the weak. I have become all things to all, that I may by all means save some. " — 1 *Corinthians* 9 : 1-23.

boleth, but as a symbol; not as a prerequisite, but as a testimony. Thus faithfully preaching baptism, the question of qualification for communion will, practically speaking, settle itself; few who are in the habit of listening to our testimony touching the moral meaning of baptism will come to the King's Supper, unless they themselves have been baptized as he directs. Thus shall we successfully steer through the straits of ecclesiasticism, clearing, on the one hand, the Scylla rock of intolerance, and, on the other hand, the Charybdis whirlpool of laxity.

A Baptist Irenicon. — As in my chapter on the "Modern Problem of Baptism" (pp. 75, 76), I suggested to our non-Baptist brethren that they could offer no richer irenicon to Christendom than by their own return to immersion as the primitive baptism, so I now suggest to my Baptist brethren that they in their turn can offer no richer irenicon to Christendom than by ceasing to insist on immersion as their qualification for communion. In fact, "close communion" is one of the mightiest impediments in the way of our King's march to victory. "Close communion" is in its own way as exclusive as Romanism itself. In opening our ecclesiastical doors to all sons of the Kingdom, we surrender no real principles; we surrender only human traditions, "ordinances," expediencies. We may lose as members of a human ecclesia; but we shall gain as members of the divine Basileia. Essentials are ever greater than contingencies; organisms are ever greater than organizations. Our King used the word "baptize" as a rite but once; he used the word "love" many times. Observe how often this word "love, loved, lovedst" occurs in the narrative of the night on which our King instituted his

Supper of Love. Note a few instances, citing from the Fourth Gospel alone:—

“Having *loved* his own who were in the world, *loved* them to the end;” “A new commandment I give to you, that ye *love* one another;” “As I *loved* you, that ye also *love* one another;” “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have *love* one toward another;” “If ye *love* me, ye will keep my commandments;” “He that has my commandments, and keeps them, he it is that *loves* me; and he that *loves* me will be *loved* by my Father, and I will *love* him, and will manifest myself to him;” “If any one *loves* me, he will keep my word; and my Father will *love* him, and we will come to him, and make our abode with him;” “As the Father *loved* me, and I *loved* you, abide in my *love*;” “This is my commandment, that ye *love* one another as I *loved* you;” “These things I command you, that ye may *love* one another;” “Righteous Father, and the world knew thee not; but I knew thee, and these knew that thou didst send me; and I make known to them thy name, and will make it known; that the *love* wherewith thou *lovedst* me may be in them, and I in them.”—*John* 13:1, 34, 35; 14:15, 20, 23, 24, 31; 15:9, 10, 12, 13, 17; 16:27; 17:23, 25, 26, etc.

Such are some of the King's sayings at his first Communion table. Thus Love is the supreme “Ordinance,” the supreme characteristic of the Father and the Son, the supreme condition of discipleship, the supreme test of “loyalty.”

And our King is greater than any or all of his subjects. Accordingly, in insisting on love rather than on rite as the controlling principle in our ecclesiastical life, we are really contending for the original faith as delivered once for all to the saints. Baptism is great, but love is greater. The judgment test will not be, “How were you baptized?” The judgment test will be, “Did you remember Christ?” Let us Baptists then rise to our great opportunity of offering to our brethren of other denominations our majestic Christian irenicon. Let us lead in the holy van of Love.

Let us stand for our King's Principle, not for our fellow-man's "ordinance." If we salute our brethren only, what do we more than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Let us raise the contention about the Holy Supper from ecclesiasticism into Christianity.

While he was speaking to the multitudes, behold, his mother and his brothers were standing without, seeking to speak to him. But he answering said to him that told him, Who is my mother, and who are my brothers? And stretching forth his hand toward his disciples, he said, Behold, my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my Father who is in heaven, he is my brother, and sister, and mother. — *Matthew* 12: 46-50.

Let us not underestimate the coalescing, unifying power of Christ's death, gathering together into one the scattered children of God. Ay, all things are ours; whether Paul the apostle of faith, or Apollos the apostle of culture, or Cephas the apostle of circumcision, all are ours; and we are Christ's, and Christ is God's. And thus we illustrate St. Paul's blessed irenicon:—

In one spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit. — *1 Corinthians* 12: 13.

The Lord's Supper a Type of Heaven.—One closing thought; The Holy Communion is a type of Heaven. Who are invited to the Lamb's marriage Supper? Not Baptists as such, not Churchmen of any kind; but Christians of all kinds. Thank God, there is no temple in heaven; for the Lord God Almighty is its only temple; the Lamb of God is its only altar, its only ritual. Happy is he who shall eat bread in the Kingdom of God.

CHAPTER VI

MODERN PROBLEM OF CHURCH CREEDS

ANOTHER problem of the modern church is the problem of Creeds.

Creeds no Problem to the Primitive Church.—Modern church, I say; for creeds were no problem to the primitive church. Our King was the divinest of teachers; but he was no “theologian” in the technical sense of the word. He did, indeed, teach in the most original of ways his doctrine of God and salvation. But he used no such theological terms as “atonement,” “consciousness,” “effectual calling,” “holiness,” “immanence,” “predestination,” “sanctification,” “theology,” etc. Yet what he did teach is the foundation of all true theology, the germ of every true creed. Nor did the apostles, not even Paul himself, teach dogmatic theology. True, he did use such theologient terms as “adoption,” “foreknowledge,” “imputation,” “justification,” “propitiation,” etc. But he did not systematize his teachings into any definite creed, he held no professorship of dogmatic theology. Nothing could be simpler than the primitive Christian creed. Take, for example, Christ’s doctrine of orthodoxy:—

If any one wishes to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. — *Luke* 9: 23.

Or John’s doctrine of salvation:—

God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that every one who believes on him should not perish, but have eternal life.
— *John* 3:16.

Or Peter's doctrine of acceptance:—

Truly I perceive that God is not a respecter of persons; but in every nation he that fears him, and works righteousness, is acceptable to him.
— *Acts* 10:34, 35.

Or Paul's doctrine of confession:—

If thou confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.—
Romans 10:9.

No, church creeds were no problem to the primitive church.

Yet Creeds are Necessary.—Nevertheless, although the primitive church had no definite, dogmatic creed, yet creeds became in the course of time more or less a necessity. For serious, thoughtful, philosophical Christians instinctively tend to systematize their religious opinions, formulating them into definite articles of faith. Indeed, a creedless Christian is apt to be a thoughtless, molluscos Christian. Sturdy Christian thinking inevitably issues in sturdy Christian creeds. Accordingly, early in the Christian era, vigorous Christian thinkers, especially those of philosophic temperament, began to systematize and formulate their less or more loose theological opinions, crystallizing them into precise, morally geometric formulas or creed-statements. And it is well that they did so. For few things are more bewildering and enervating than vagueness of religious ideas; few things are more clarifying and buttressing than exactitude of Christian concep-

tions. Regarded in this light, the value of the historic creeds of Christendom is almost priceless.

But Creeds must Grow. — But Christianity is a living thing, and therefore must grow. Our conception of Christianity (that is, if we are really students of it as well as professors of it) is a process undergoing more or less of changes. While truth, as outside of us, — as an absolute thing existing in and by itself, — is incapable of change, truth, as inside us, — as a relative thing less or more apprehensible by us, — is capable of change, becoming by that fact a germ potential of all growth. As a matter of fact, the history of the Kingdom of God is ever and anon way-marked by epochs of Christian discovery and, therefore, of Christian advance. Peter the Rock was an advance upon John the Baptizer, Paul the Apostle, upon Peter the Rock; John the Beloved, upon Paul the Apostle. Augustine was an advance upon Athanasius; Wesley, upon Augustine; Bushnell, upon Wesley. Each enlarged the truth, not by adding to it, but by unfolding it. And so it comes to pass, that in this sense it is true that the Kingdom of God is ever a growth. Accordingly, creeds must ever be adjusted to growing conceptions of truth. Let me illustrate and enforce this lesson by one of the homely parable-similes of our King, none the less telling because so homely: —

The Wine-skins. — No one puts new wine into old wine-skins; else the new wine will burst the skins, and the wine will be spilled, and the skins will perish; but they put new wine into fresh wine-skins, and both are preserved. And no one having drunk old wine desires new; for he says, The old is good. — *Matthew 9: 17; Mark 2: 22; Luke 5: 37-39.*

Meaning for Christ's Contemporaries. — Such, at least in part, is the King's answer to the question of the Baptizer's

disciples about ritualistic fasting, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but thy disciples fast not?" Our King's reply is as though he had said:—

"My religion is a living, and therefore a growing thing. You cannot confine it in any straight-jacket of the past. You cannot keep alive my doctrine of offerings in the old, worn-out skins of the Mosaic tithes; my doctrine of the sabbath within the rabbinic tether of fifteen furlongs; my doctrine of worship within the shambles of sacrificial animals; my doctrine of righteousness in the narrow groove of ritual; my doctrine of salvation in an acacia-ark of two cubits by a cubit and a half. The old covenant has had its uses. It was an excellent religion for your fathers when they came up out of Egypt and the wilderness inexperienced as children. And the ancient ritual was a good bottle-skin for the wine of the old Mosaism. But our Jewish nation has been sipping at that old wine for centuries till now it has all gone; nothing is now left but a shrivelled, decayed bottle of goatskin. I have come with a new form of religion; a new religion which, like the fermenting, swelling principle in wine, has a capacity of growth. You may, if you choose, pour it into the old skin of Judaism; but, if you do, it will burst the skin and run out; the only result will be that you will have neither the skin of the letter nor the wine of the spirit. No, the religion of Moses and my religion are, in the matter of growth, incompatible, and mutually destroy each other. You are, O disciples of John, wishing to be followers of Moses and at the same time followers of me. It is impossible; the only result will be that you will cease to be good Hebrews, and will never become good Christians. The only thing to be done is this: Put the new wine into fresh skins. and both will be preserved together."

Meaning for Ourselves. — And the lesson, in its essential meaning, is as weighty for ourselves as it was for the King's contemporaries. There is still such a thing as life, and life means growth. Let me then apply this principle of growth, or adjustability of form to life, to the sons of the Kingdom, especially in the matter of creeds; an application which I cannot but think is particularly pertinent, for what are creeds but skins for the wine of the Kingdom of God?

Creeds are Apt to become Cages. — Now creeds, in their very nature, are apt to become cages. They are men's notions of truth, crystallized into statements; accordingly, they have the brittleness of crystals; to alter them may shatter them. Moreover, creeds are tiny as compared with truth itself. For any creed, even the truest that man has ever devised or arranged, is at best but man's notion of the truth; and truth is ever larger than men's notions. Portions, or aspects, of moral truth you may define, that is, bound, with tolerable accuracy. But in spite of your best attempts at definition or exact statement, it will be found that the real truth lies largely in the margins and outskirts. Hence parables are often truer than histories, hymns than creeds, unspoken sentiments than confessions of faith; and this just because parables, hymns, unspoken sentiments, have changing boundaries, and therefore can adjust themselves to enlarging apprehensions of truth. Once more, it is a tendency of creeds, in consequence of their inflexibility, to arrest the growth of the enclosed truth, and even strangle its very life. And, on the other hand, it is in the very nature of truth as a growing force to burst its enclosing creed. It is the everlasting duel of prisoner and prison, nut and shell, wine and skin.

Yet Creeds are Indispensable. — Shall we then undertake to dispense altogether with creeds? Assuredly not. For creeds, notwithstanding their curbing tendency, are at least in this world necessary to the preservation of truth. They serve as receptacles for its custody, as vehicles for its propagation. Viewed in this light, the church owes an incalculable debt to such thinkers as Athanasius, Augustine, Calvin, Wesley, Hodge. In fact, constructed as we

are, we cannot do without forms. What the skin is to the wine, what the garment is to the body, that the creed is to the truth.

Give Truth a Chance to Grow.—If then, on the one hand, truth cannot do without creed, and if, on the other hand, truth tends to burst creed and creed tends to strangle truth, what are we to do? Simply this: Put new wine into new skins. In other words, recognize the principle of growth, and adjust creed accordingly. Do not stereotype your conception of truth. Give it a chance to grow. For the discoveries and achievements of one age are but swaddling-bands for the next. The husk which is a home for the seed as sleeping becomes a prison for the seed as awaked. Christianity is more than a stone, even though that stone were a Koh-i-noor; if it were nothing more than a Koh-i-noor, you might be content with setting it in the exquisite framework of an inflexible creed, and keep it safely locked in your jewel-case, unless indeed you take it out for exhibition on Sundays and at denominational conventions. No, Christianity is more than a dead gem; Christianity is a living, unfolding seed, capable of all growths, even that mustard seed of the Kingdom which is yet to overshadow earth and eternity. Do not then confine it in any iron cylinder, however capacious or polished; do not expect it to grow along any inexorable groove. Take care of it, water it, guard it; but do not incarcerate it. Give it a free chance to grow. Beware of prejudgments or foregone conclusions. Louis Agassiz, speaking of the many fierce battles fought in the early days of geology between the champions of the Igneous School who maintained that the solid crust of the earth was exclusively due to the action

of fire, and the champions of the Aqueous School who maintained that it had been accumulated wholly under the agency of water, says :—

This difference of opinion grew up very naturally : for the great leaders of the two schools lived in different localities, and pursued their investigations over regions where the geological phenomena were of an entirely opposite character — the one exhibiting the effect of volcanic eruptions, the other that of stratified deposits. It was the old story of the two knights on opposite sides of the shield, one swearing that it was made of gold, the other that it was made of silver, and almost killing each other before they discovered that it was made of both. So prone are men to hug their theories and shut their eye to any antagonistic facts, that it is related of Werner, the great leader of the Aqueous School, that he was actually on his way to see a geological locality of special interest, but, being told that it confirmed the views of his opponents, he turned round and went home again, refusing to see what might force him to change his opinions. If the rocks did not confirm his theory, so much the worse for the rocks — he would none of them. At last it was found that the two great chemists, fire and water, had worked together in the vast laboratory of the globe, and since then scientific men have decided to work together also ; and if they still have a passage at arms occasionally over some of the doubtful points, yet the results of their investigations are ever drawing them nearer to each other, — since men who study truth, when they reach their goal, must always meet at last on some common ground. — AGASSIZ'S *Geological Sketches*, pp. 6, 7.

Do not then take it for granted, as Werner did in geology, that everything is settled in theology. Do not assume that because a theology is said to be “new,” it is therefore a heresy. Paul, Stephen, Jesus himself, were denounced in their day as heretics. Rather let it be for us to leave the elements of the doctrine of Christ, and press on to maturity. For the kingdom of God is as vital and crescent to-day as it was when its Founder proclaimed it amid the hills of Palestine. Give, then, the truth free scope to

grow. Hear what the Spirit is still saying to the churches. Be students still in the school of our great King, disciples in his ever enlarging university, evermore learning from him. Indeed, it would be well were Christians of all sects to gather occasionally, to compare discoveries which may have been made under guidance of the Spirit, and adjust our symbols accordingly. As the perennial vine of Christ's truth yields new wine, let us put it into new skins. If we put it into the old skins, the ever growing truth will sooner or later burst the skins, and the new wine will be lost. The consequence will be either merciless bigotry or contemptuous infidelity. But by adjusting creed to truth, letter to spirit, form to life, skin to wine, both will be preserved together.

Festina Lente.—Yet at this very point let us learn a lesson of tenderness from the Parable-speaker; for he immediately adds:—

No one having drunk old wine wishes new; for he says, The old is good.—*Luke 5:39.*

The allusion of course is to his countrymen, who were still clinging to the institutions of Moses. It is a fine instance of our King's beautiful gentleness. It is as though he had said:—

“Yes, I have come with a new, better religion. Yet I do not wonder that you prefer the old. It was the religion of your fathers. It is hard to give up inherited convictions, to tear one's self away from the old homestead. No one, having sipped old wine, straightway asks for new; for he declares, The old is good enough for me.”

Let us then, as sons of the Kingdom, be considerate in our citizenship, gentle in our proposals. Let us fraternally propose whatever improvements the Spirit of God may

seem to have suggested to us. But let us be patient with those of our comrades who cannot so readily fall into line with our proposed advance. Time and grace work wonders.

"New Things and Old." — Or, to quote another parable of our King, — his parable of the discipled Scribe : —

Every scribe who has been discipled to the kingdom of heaven is like a householder, who brings forth out of his treasure new things and old. — *Matthew 13: 52.*

That is to say, it is the Christian teacher who is the true "scribe," because trained in the principles, methods, and spirit of the Kingdom of God. As such, he is a steward of God's manifold mysteries, charged with the custody and disbursements of heavenly treasures. Accordingly, he must bring forth out of his treasure-house (a manifold treasure-house it is, — the thesaurus of Bible, of Nature, of observation, of experience, of scholarship, of philosophy) two sets of treasures. First, "new things"; not "new" in the sense of novelty, but "new" in the sense of freshness — fresh unfoldings, fresh methods, fresh applications. Secondly, "old things"; not "old" in the sense of ancient, but "old" in the sense of primary, fundamental, eternal. Though an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than that which has been preached from the beginning, let him be anathema. Thirdly, "new things and old"; that is to say, a total, symmetric gospel. The Christian scribe, then, who has been discipled to the Kingdom of Heaven, or the Messianic dispensation, must avoid two extremes. First, he must beware of teaching "new" things without also teaching "old" things; for example, teaching modern science without ancient Scripture; current events without

Bible history; recent discoveries without pristine landmarks; modern hypotheses without ancient traditions; etc. And, secondly, he must beware of teaching "old" things without also teaching "new" things; for example, teaching the old covenant without the new; the Pentateuch without the Evangelists; the Prophecies without the Epistles; traditional theology without contemporaneous readjustments; the Bible of Nature without the Bible of Scripture; etc. It is not then by teaching "new" things alone, neither is it by teaching "old" things alone, but it is by teaching "new things *and* old," that we can blend mobility of progress with stability of basis. The lesson of our present parable is this: Conservative Progress.

Creeds must be Tested.—This problem of creeds is pertinent to our times. We are living in a critical period. It is an age of social upheavals, intellectual revolutions, creedal cataclysms. How shall we meet the crisis? By sneering? That would be supercilious. By blinking? That would be owlish. By running? That would be cowardly. By fighting? That would be useless. By embracing? That would be rash. By testing? That would be Christian. The gift of Reason is perhaps God's greatest gift. It is time that we reclaim from the enemy such noble words as "rationalism," "criticism," and the like. We must exercise our moral judgments in the matter of these newly proposed creeds, not with Athenian curiosity, spending our leisure for nothing else, but to tell or to hear something new; but with Berean inquiry, daily searching the Scriptures whether these new propositions are true. The apostle Paul has given us an admirable canon here:—

Prove all things ; hold fast that which is good ; abstain from every form of evil. — 1 *Thessalonians* 5 : 21, 22.

Prove all Things. — First, “prove, probe, test, all things.” This is the strong point in the “Experimental Philosophy.”

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God ; because many false prophets have gone forth into the world. — 1 *John* 4 : 1.

But what shall be our tests ? First, the Bible ; here is where the Bereans were nobler than the Thessalonians :—

The Bereans were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, daily searching the Scriptures whether these things were so. — *Acts* 17 : 11.

A second test is common sense : erudition, logic, philosophy, are good ; but common sense is incomparably better. A third test is furnished by the result which the creed in question produces on the life and character of him who professes it : in proportion that this creed raises him in daily life before God and man, in that proportion the creed is true ; in proportion that it lowers him, in that proportion the creed is false. But the supreme test of the creed under examination is to be found in the effect it produces on our estimate of the person and character of our Lord Jesus Christ : if it tends to exalt him in our loving reverence, it is true, even though proposed by an ignorant layman ; if it tends to lower him by ever so little, it is false, even though proposed by the most orthodox of councils, and must be spurned under foot. Recall the apostle Paul’s test of orthodoxy, — “*According to Christ*” :

Beware lest there shall be any one that is carrying you away as spoils through philosophy and vain deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the rudiments of the world, and not according to Christ; because in him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.
— *Colossians* 2:8, 9.

Hold Fast the Good.—Secondly, “Hold fast that which is good.” Having tested the creed, cling to that which has stood the test. Here, as we have seen, is the abiding value of some of the historic creeds and traditions of Christendom. Let us hold the pattern of healthful words which we have heard from the past, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

Reject the Bad.—Thirdly, “Abstain from every form of evil.” Having tested the creed, throw away whatever fails to endure the test. For the past, although often oracular, is not always infallible. History’s highway is strewn with human debris, moraines of glacial theology, ruins of ecclesiastical fabrics.

Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be;
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.—*In Memoriam.*

The moment a seed germinates, its shell must go. Recall how Saul of Tarsus burst the husk of the Old Covenant.

Summary.—In sum, sift every doctrine; garner the wheat; reject the chaff.

Let us beware, then, on the one hand, of being hasty in our acceptance of a new creed, or in our rejection of it. It often takes time to do the work of assaying thoroughly. There are times when nothing is so majestic as calmly

waiting. On the other hand, let us beware of being stubborn. Study the "logic of events," and adjust accordingly. Recall the council of Gamaliel before the Sanhedrin:—

Men of Israel, take heed to yourselves, what you are about to do in respect to these men. Let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will be overthrown, but if it is of God ye will not be able to overthrow them; lest perhaps ye be found even fighting against God. — *Acts 5:34-39.*

In all events, let us not allow ourselves to be nervous. Let us learn a lesson here from geology. According to the geologists, there have been long ages of uniformity, then sudden epochs of catastrophe; all issuing in a finer crystallization. New wine must be put in fresh skins. Are you disheartened by these modern changes of theological opinions? Recall the great Beza when standing before the king of Navarre on the charge of rebuking the king's brother. "Beware how you touch my brother," shouted the angered monarch. And the good Beza steadfastly replied: "Sire, it belongs to the church to be struck, not to strike. But remember the church is an anvil which has worn out many a hammer."

Or, as some modern poet has phrased it:—

Hammer away, ye hostile bands;
Your hammers break—God's anvil stands.— *Anonymous.*

CHAPTER VII¹

MODERN PROBLEM OF CHURCH WORSHIP

Worship a Human Instinct.—Worship is a human instinct. Wherever travellers have penetrated, — whether into the polar regions, the heart of the Dark Continent, or the most isolated tribes of the seas, — they have never found a tribe so degraded that it did not worship something, God, man, beast, demon, thing. On the other hand, there has never been a nation so civilized that it did not have its own divinity or divinities; recall Baal of Assyria, Osiris of Egypt, Brahm of India, Ormuzd of Persia, Jupiter of Rome, Zeus of Greece, Jehovah of Canaan. True, there are in our own favored land a few who profess themselves to be atheists. Nevertheless, even these gentlemen have some kind of a god of their own; if it is not the personal Jehovah of the Bible, it is some impersonal Absolute of Law, of Force, of Existence, of Something or Other. It is said that even Voltaire prayed in an Alpine thunderstorm. No man was ever born an atheist; if he has become one, it is because he has suicidally emasculated his own moral nature. This innate worship of God is one of the few relics of the Paradise that has been; it is also one of the many auguries of the Paradise that is to be: —

¹ The substance of this chapter was given in one of the "Ten Lectures" delivered before the Union Theological Seminary, New York, in the autumn of 1896.

They have no rest day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was, and who is, and who is to come. — *Revelation 4:8*.

Man worships as instinctively as he breathes.

Purpose of the Ancient Tabernacle. — And the God of Revelation made provision for this instinct in his covenant with his ancient people: —

Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. . . . There I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony. — *Exodus 25:8, 22*.

Observe what Jehovah declares to be the precise purpose of his tabernacle; he did not appoint it as the place where his people might gather together to worship him; he appointed it as the place where he would enshrine himself and meet his worshipping people. This phrase, "tabernacle of the congregation" (or "tent of meeting," as it is rendered in the Revised Version), did not mean the meeting-place of man and man in worship; it meant the meeting-place of God himself and man. It is curious to recall how the Established Church of England paid an unconscious tribute to "dissenters" by styling their places of worship "meeting-houses" or "conventicles." No, Jehovah appointed his ancient tabernacle to serve as the shrine for himself; the congress of Godhead and manhead; the convention of the Infinite and the finite: —

"There I will meet with them, and commune with them from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim."

Accordingly, when the tabernacle was dedicated, the Shechinah, or dazzling symbol of Jehovah's presence,

which had been hovering for many weeks over Sinai, majestically swept downward into the plain, and covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle.

The Levitical Worship a Divinely Prescribed Liturgy. — But Jehovah not only appointed the tabernacle for his own enshrinement and communion with Israel; he also appointed an elaborate system of worship by which Israel could meet him in humble adoration, thanksgiving, confession, supplication, consecration, communion. This was the meaning of the priesthood, with its minute details of vestments, ablutions, sacrifices, oblations, festivals, and the like, — all this being scrupulously arranged, according to a divinely shown pattern. True, it appealed to the eye rather than to the ear, being, so to speak, a pictorial service or dramatic liturgy. Nevertheless, the chief point is this: for fifteen hundred years Jehovah's chosen, covenant people worshipped according to a divinely appointed liturgy.

"God is Spirit." — But that ancient sanctuary, with all its elaborate ritual, has been abolished in Christ. Recall the story of Jesus at Jacob's Well: —

The woman says to him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain [Gerizim]; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus says to her, Woman, believe me, an hour is coming, when ye will neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem worship the Father. Ye worship that which ye know not; we worship that which we know; because salvation is from the Jews. But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such the Father also seeks to be his worshippers. God is spirit; and they that worship him, must worship in spirit and truth. — *John 4 : 19-24.*

I know not that even the Son of God ever made a more majestic annunciation. This proclamation by Jacob's Well forms a momentous epoch in the moral history of mankind; it marks a colossal stride in the unfolding of the ideal of worship. It is as though our divine Prophet had said: —

"Henceforth worship is not to be a thing of place and time and rite. Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when men will neither on your Gerizim nor on our Moriah worship the Father. Ye Samaritans are worshipping blindly. What though you accept the five books of Moses? You do not catch their meaning. But we Jews know what we worship. We understand the meaning of passover lamb; day of atonement; holy of holies; mercy-seat. We know that the promised Messiah is to come from Jewish stock. As then, between Moriah and Gerizim, Moriah must take precedence. Yet our system of worship, although divinely ordained, is only provisional. The hour has already come in which all who truly realize the ideal of worship will worship the Father in spirit and truth; in spirit as opposed to form; in truth as opposed to type. For this is the kind of worshippers whom the Father of spirits seeks. Being himself of a spiritual nature, he yearns toward what in us is spiritual. All true worship is but response to our Father's yearning."

What sublime teaching for a Galilean carpenter! Alas, how slowly the Church has been learning this sublime lesson of the spirituality of Christian worship! To this day the confessors of the Prophet of Jacob's Well are debating about Gerizim and Moriah; about tiny matters of vestments, canons, reordination, rebaptism, terms of communion, and the like. One might almost fancy that the story of Jacob's Well were altogether a myth, and that the Divine Man had never been born. No, worship is no longer a question of form, — henceforth worship is a question of spirit; no longer a matter of Jewish distinctions of food and drink, — hence-

forth a matter of righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Must we then dispense with all Forms of Worship?—
 “Are we then (I hear you asking) to dispense with all forms of worship? Must we understand our Master as teaching that there is no need of church organizations and sacraments and set seasons of worship?”

Forms are still Needed.—Certainly not. We need all these, and such as these, as helps to worship, and therefore we must have them still. For the body is the spirit's home, vehicle, organ, inlet, outlet. Accordingly, body and spirit act and react on each other. No matter how exalted our ideal of a Christian life may be, no matter how exalted our Christian character actually is, a quite certain thing is this: the possibility of a genuine spiritual worship at any given time does depend greatly on our environment; for example, on the state of our bodily health, the comfortableness of the temperature, the thoroughness of the ventilation, the freedom from noise and distraction, the manner of the preacher, the religiousness of the music, and the like. Even the character of the architecture affects the possibility of spiritual worship,—many persons being really aided in their devotion by

The high embowed roof,
 With antick pillars massy proof,
 And storied windows richly dight,
 Casting a dim religious light. — *Il Penseroso*.

As a simple matter of fact, we cannot, even if we would, at least while we remain in this world, get rid of our bodies; we must take them with us whenever we go to church, and be less or more affected by them during our worship. Here,

in fact, is one of the reasons of the incarnation or enfleshment of Deity. Just because we are perforce more or less swayed by our bodily organisms, it pleased the Father that in Jesus Christ his Son all the fulness of the Godhead should dwell bodily, body-wise. The incarnate career of the Son of God is Deity in sensible outflow and manifestation. The visible Jesus, because moving in the realm of our senses, helps us to see the invisible Father. Herein also lies the meaning of the symbols of baptism and communion. These are outward acts, palpable to the senses; and therefore they have been appointed to help us, body-invested that we are, to grasp the spiritual truths which they visibly symbolize. Forms of worship then are necessary. But they are necessary merely as means; they are not themselves ends. The great thing, then, is to use forms intelligently, conceiving them as being only aids to worship, mere ladders by which the soul may climb to her eternal habitation. For God is spirit; and therefore they who worship him must worship in spirit and truth. Nevertheless, we are still in the body; and therefore even spiritual worship must take on some kind of form or liturgy. Let us beware, then, of that pantheistic philosophy which, to use the words of one of its most distinguished champions, teaches:—

Religion demands no particular actions, forms, or modes of thought; man's ploughing is as holy as his praying, his daily bread as the smoke of his sacrifice, his home as sacred as his temple; his week day and his Sabbath are alike God's day. — RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

On the other hand, Horace Bushnell never said a more sensible thing than when, in his sermon entitled "Routine Observance Indispensable," he declares:—

We need to keep fixed times, or appointed rounds of observance, as truly as to be in holy impulse; to have prescribed periods in duty as truly as to have a spirit of duty; to be in the drill of observance as well as in the liberty of faith. — *Sermons on Living Subjects*, XVI.

Yes, I believe in Sabbaths and sanctuaries and hymns and prayers and sacraments. Were it not for these, and such as these, I honestly believe that true personal godliness would soon perish from the earth. The consecrated temple, the gathered multitude, the devout posture, the humble invocation, the sacred melody, the holy reading, the reverent adoration, the hearty thanksgiving, the lowly confession, the fervent supplication, the generous intercession, the ardent aspiration, the glowing consecration, the grateful offering, the uplifting sermon, the solemn baptism, the peaceful communion, the gracious benediction, — these, and such as these, are the stately buttresses and graceful shafts on which the Master of assemblies rests the temple of his truth, and from which his righteousness goes forth as brightness, and his salvation as a lamp that burns. It is as true to-day as it was in the days of the psalmist Asaph, God's way is in the sanctuary.

Liturgy a Question of Degree. — And, as a matter of fact, even non-liturgical churches do have some form of liturgical service. Indeed, this whole question of liturgy is largely a question of degree rather than of nature, ranging all the way from the simplicity of the Quaker meeting to the elaborateness of the Roman ritual. The comparative bareness of the service in our non-liturgical churches is not so much a denial of the principle of a liturgy as it is a recoil against the excessive liturgy of ritualism. In fact, do not we ourselves, non-liturgical ministers though we are, have in our pulpits a

printed "Order of Service," — a little breviary of our own, — varying, it is true, in different pulpits, yet serving as a sort of chart for such sons of Levi as may honor us with their friendly exchange, particularly for those ecclesiastical peripatetics who are ever walking through dry places, seeking rest, and finding none? No, the question is not so much a question of substance as it is a question of degree. We all do have some kind of a liturgy. And our problem is : How much liturgy shall we have? Where shall we stop?

Devotions are the Chief Part of Worship. — The responsibility of Christian ministers in this matter of public worship is very serious. For devotions, or acts of homage, constitute the chief part of worship. Let us beware, then, of falling into the irreverent habit of regarding the devotional services as merely subsidiary, degrading them into what are profanely styled "preliminary services, mere accessories," and the like. In fact, the devotional part of public worship is more important than even the preaching part; for the preaching part is to men, but the devotional part is to God. Let me, then, at this point address myself directly to ministers. Do not let the devotional part of worship drift. Arrange it as orderly and progressively as you would arrange the movements of your sermon. Poet and scientist alike sing, "Order is Heaven's first law." Listen to Ulysses as he stands before Agamemnon's tent : —

The heavens themselves, the planets, and this centre
Observe degree, priority, and place,
Insisture, course, proportion, season, form,
Office, and custom, in all line of order. — *Troilus and Cressida.*

It is particularly true in the sphere of public worship. Indeed, it was public worship which St. Paul had in mind when he wrote to the Corinthian Church:—

God is not a God of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. . . . Let all things be done becomingly and in order.
—1 *Corinthians* 14: 33, 40.

If we are ever to deport ourselves with reverent decorum, it is when we stand in the presence of the King of kings in his own appointed audience-court.

Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God; be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few. — *Ecclesiastes* 5: 1, 2.

Poverty of Devotional Element in Non-liturgical Churches.
— How then shall we as a congregation of worshippers express our worship? Unitedly, as one congregation? Or isolatedly, as a congregation of one? Before undertaking to answer this question, let me say that I have the painful conviction that the worshippers in our non-liturgical churches are, generally speaking, allowed too small a part in the public worship of Almighty God. Excepting the responsive Bible readings now prevailing in some of our churches, and also of the singing (alas, even this privilege is in many instances artistically denied us), everything is done by a vicarious officiator. No voice but the preacher's is heard in adoration, thanksgiving, confession, supplication, intercession, aspiration. So far as the vocal act of homage goes, the preacher alone worships. Should some angelic visitor enter one of our sanctuaries and observe the silence of the congregation, I am not sure but that he would imagine that some calamity like that which befell

ancient Zachariah in the temple had befallen Christ's churchly priesthood to-day, and he would wonderingly ask what sin this people had committed that they should thus be struck dumb. Enter any Roman Catholic sanctuary while the service is going on. The priest is everything; the laity is nothing. From beginning to ending, excepting the organist and choir, it is the priest who carries on the entire worship; the congregation remaining as voiceless as an asylum of mutes or a graveyard of the dead. Enter one of our non-liturgical churches, and the same scene in its essential features is reënacted. From beginning to ending, with the exception of the singing, and perhaps of the responsive reading, it is the minister who is everything; the congregation is nothing. It is the minister who does the preaching; and this of course is right. But preaching is not, strictly speaking, a part of worship. Preaching means expounding, instructing, warning, entreating, comforting, building up of the body of Christ. As such, and in its own place, preaching is of supreme importance, and indeed indispensable. But preaching in itself is not a part of worship. The addressing men on the subject of their duties and privileges is not worship; except in the general sense that all life, alike on Sunday and on week days, in closet and in market, ought to be a ceaseless liturgy. Public worship means the direct adoration of Almighty God and the direct supplication of his favor. It means the personal soaring of each individual worshipper toward his heavenly Father. Alas, this individual privilege of each member of the congregation we allow the minister to appropriate to himself. The preacher alone lifts the veil, alone enters the holy of holies, alone communes

before the mercy-seat ; meanwhile the congregation stands mute in the outer court. The New Testament doctrine of the rent veil and the royal priesthood of all Christians gives way to the Old Testament doctrine of sacerdotal order ; or, what is worse, to the Roman heresy of a priestly caste and a priestly worship. Even the pulpit has been removed from the side of the sanctuary to the centre, so that the preacher himself is perpetually in the foreground, while the worship of Almighty God is virtually consigned to a comparatively subordinate niche. How painfully true this is may be seen in the fact that, while it is not considered rude to enter the sanctuary during the earlier parts of the service, such as the singing or the Bible reading—that is to say, be it observed, during that part of the service which is distinctly liturgical or worshipful—it is considered rude to come in or go out while the minister is preaching, as though, forsooth, the main thing in worship were ignorant, feeble, sinful man, instead of Jehovah of hosts. What we need is a return to the ancient ways, even the good old paths of our fathers, falling in line with the venerable and saintly past, worshipping liturgically, as did the church of Knox and Luther, Anselm and Chrysostom, Peter and Isaiah, David and Moses.

Beware of Routine Worship.—On the other hand, we must guard ourselves against falling into mere routine worship. Remember what our Master himself has said in this very matter of worship :—

In praying use not vain repetitions, as the Gentiles do ; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not therefore like them ; for your Father knows what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. — *Matthew 6 : 7, 8.*

Does our King then mean to forbid all repetitions of the same words? Certainly not. He himself bids repetition; "When ye pray, *say*;" then follows the Pattern Prayer according to the Evangelist Luke. Moreover, our King himself repeated the same prayer in Gethsemane. What, then, does our King forbid? Evidently the senseless repetition of prayers for repetition's own sake, substituting quantity for quality, vaporizing verbal requests into monotonous iterations and reiterations. And this is a characteristically heathen habit. Thus prayed Baal's prophets on Carmel in Elijah's time, calling on the name of their god from morning even until noon, saying, "O Baal, hear us!" Thus pray Buddhist monks to-day, ceaselessly repeating for whole days the sacred syllable "Um! Um! Um!" But is this much worse than the rosary of our Roman Catholic friends, which requires that each of its fifteen decades shall begin with a Paternoster, be continued with ten Ave Marias, and end with a Gloria Patri? Is it much worse than the ritual of our liturgical friends, which requires that on the recurrence of a certain day in each succeeding year precisely the same prayer shall be recited? Nay, more, is this Gentile custom of using vain repetitions much worse than the stereotyped prayers of not a few of us non-liturgists, — prayers in which the round of particulars and the very phraseology may be predicted with almost as much certainty as the eclipses or the tides? If we cannot do better than this, — if we must use vain repetitions as the heathen do, — it would pay for us to buy one of the devotional machines of the Thibetan Lamaists, and, cranking the wheel, set our prayers a-going.

Praise and Prayer the Chief Elements of Public Worship. — And now, to revert to the specific problem in hand, how shall we conduct worship in non-liturgical churches? Of course I cannot go into minute particulars, — questions, for example, of order of service, selections for Bible reading, saints' days, posture, costume, and the like. I must content myself with general suggestions. The chief elements of public worship are two: Praise and Prayer. And just here our King's Model Prayer is our divine pattern. Observe how the first half, —

“Our Father who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name;
Thy kingdom come;
Thy will be done,
As in heaven, so on earth,” —

consists in praise to God. Observe how the second half, —

“Give us this day our daily bread;
And forgive us our debts,
As we also have forgiven our debtors;
And bring us not into temptation,
But deliver us from the evil one,” —

consists in prayer for ourselves and our fellow-men. And observe particularly that the praise comes before the prayer; the angels of our worship ascending to God before descending upon the ladder of the Son of man. This divinely prescribed order of thought in praise and prayer deserves profound pondering. In studying it, let us reverently follow the same divine order.

Meaning of Praise. — And first, what does praise mean? To answer in general outline: praise means adoration, thanksgiving, aspiration, consecration, offering, commu-

ning, and the like. Now the question is: How shall we as a congregation of worshippers express our praise, our service of adorations, thanksgivings, aspirations? Let an inspired apostle answer our question:—

Speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.—*Ephesians* 5:19.

Or, translating more literally:

“Speaking one to another responsively, in psalms and hymns and odes pneumatic, chanting and psalming in your heart to the Lord.”

No wonder that Pliny, writing to his master Trajan about the close of the first century, describes the early church as accustomed to assemble before daybreak, and sing alternately one to another, praising Christ as God:—

Ante lucem convenire, carmenque Christo quasi Deo dicere secum invicem.—*Epist.* X. 97.

The exile of Patmos describes worship in heaven itself as liturgical; see Revelation 4:8-11; 5:9-14; 7:9-12; 15:3, 4; etc.

Music the Natural Outlet of Devotion.—For all deep feeling, especially the feeling of praise, is essentially poetical, instinctively yearning for the rhythmical accompaniment of sound. In fact, the truest devotion is also the highest poetry. It has been so in all lands and in all ages. Recall the pæans of Miriam, Deborah, Hannah, David, Isaiah, Mary, Zachariah, Simeon; even the great Hallel or Hallelujah of our King's final passover. The Delphian Pythoness herself was wont to breathe forth her oracle in hexameter. Even the Quakers, although they

disallow music, yet preach intoningly, in a singsong way. In brief, music is the natural outlet of devotion. What does not the church of God owe in way of worship to the hymns of Greek Anatolius, Latin Ambrose, French Bernard, Italian Aquinas, German Luther, English Watts, American Palmer? Ay, here is the real concord of the ages; here is the true ecumenical. I do thank God that the Christian hymns, of whatever communion, are the common property of Christ's church of all communions. Here, at least, the non-liturgical churches are themselves liturgical; for they join in praising God congregationally, synchronously using together the same hymnal formulas.

Hebrew Parallelisms. — But we are not only to praise God by speaking one to another in hymns and spiritual songs; we are also to praise God in psalms, chanting and psalming in our heart to the Lord. In fact, the Psalter of the Bible ever has been, and I trust ever will be, the chief praise-book of the church. Indeed, many of the Psalms were composed for a purpose distinctly liturgical; for example, Psalms 92–100. Accordingly, they have an antiphonal or responsive structure; that is, the lines or strophes were to be chanted alternatively, for example, by sections of the choir responsively to each other, or by Levite and congregation. For while English rhythm is a rhythm of metre, and English rhyme is a rhyme of sound, Hebrew rhythm was the rhythm of statement, Hebrew rhyme was the rhyme of sentiment; or, as Ewald beautifully expresses it, “the rapid stroke as of alternate wings,” “the heaving and sinking as of the troubled heart.” Viewed in this light, Hebrew poetry is as much nobler than modern as rhyme of thought is nobler

than rhyme of sound. When will our colleges teach Job and David and Isaiah as well as Homer and Virgil and Dante? Now this musical burst of soul and its responsive echo — this deep calling unto deep — is quite lost in our Authorized Version, and also in the Psalter of the Book of Common Prayer; for in these versions the parallelism of sense-rhythm or thought-rhyme is ruptured into “verses” so-called, which, however, are not so much verses as fractures. I confess that the responsive readings of Scripture, whether in the Psalter of liturgical churches, or in the Bible selections of some of our non-liturgical churches, have never impressed me deeply; for they are often painfully mechanical, suggesting neither the thought-rhythm of Hebrew parallelism nor the sound-rhyme of modern hymnals. One of the rich boons which the revisers of our English Bible have conferred on us is their printing the Psalms (as also they ought to have printed many of the Prophecies) in lines instead of “verses” so called; thus helping to preserve the parallelism so exquisitely characteristic of Hebrew poetry.

Superiority of Chanting. — And herein lies the superiority of chanting. For, while in certain respects chanting is said to be more difficult than singing, yet in other respects it is the simplest form of religious music, and therefore it offers least temptation to pride of artistic execution. Moreover, chanting is intelligible; and this is certainly an advantage. For, according to a master of spiritual music, —

Even the lifeless things giving sound, whether pipe or harp, if they give no distinction in the sounds, how shall that which is piped or that which is harped be known? For even if a trumpet give an uncertain

sound, who will prepare for war? So also ye, unless ye utter through the tongue speech easy to be understood, how will that which is spoken be known? For ye will be speaking into the air. — 1 *Corinthians* 14: 7-9.

Once more, chanting is probably the most ancient form of temple music. To the reflective worshipper few things are more inspiring than the sense of joining in strains centuries old. What can awaken a sublimer feeling of worship than to join in chanting, for instance, the *Benedicte*, the *Magnificat*, the *Benedictus*, the *Gloria in Excelsis*, the *Nunc Dimittis*, the *Gloria Patri*, the *Tersanctus*, the *Te Deum Laudamus*? What could be auguster than for a congregation to rise at the beginning of worship, and join in chanting antiphonally the *Venite, exultemus Domino*?

O come, let us sing unto Jehovah;
 Let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.
 Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving,
 Let us make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.
 For Jehovah is a great God,
 And a great King above all gods.
 In his hand are the deep places of the earth;
 The heights of the mountains are his also;
 The sea is his, and he made it;
 And his hands formed the dry land.
 O come, let us worship and bow down;
 Let us kneel before Jehovah our Maker;
 For he is our God,
 And we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.
 — *Psalms* 95: 1-7.

Now when this responsive chanting or recitative of the Hebrew parallelism shall become more familiar in our worship, and take the place due it in the musical part of our service, then will the Hebrew Psalter become still more than ever the praise-book of the church. True, to chant

well is a difficult art; but it can be learned. Music composers could hardly do a more sacred thing than to set all the liturgical psalms to simple and fitting chants; nor could music teachers do a richer service to the church than to teach the children of our congregations (not merely "boys' choirs") how to chant the Psalms; thus singing in the temple Hosannas to the Son of David, and out of the mouths of babes and sucklings perfecting praise. Let our children of this generation be thus trained to chant the melodies of the Psalter; then the worshippers in the next generation will indeed be, like the sons of Korah in the ancient temple, singers to the Chief Musician.

Problem of Public Prayer. — But prayer, not less than praise, is a part of worship. Indeed, to praise without praying is to worship as Cain and the Pharisee worshipped. And now our question is: How shall we as a congregation express our prayers, our service of confessions, supplications, intercessions, aspirations? Shall each worshipper pray silently, following the minister as he prays for the congregation? Or shall the minister and the congregation pray together, joining their voices in familiar and appropriate formulas? In brief, shall the congregation pray directly, or shall it pray by proxy? Both directly and by proxy is my answer.

Need of Extemporaneous Prayers. — On the one hand, we need extemporaneous prayers. Observe, however, that when I say "extemporaneous" I do not mean unpremeditated. For no minister has a right to undertake to lead his people in their devotions, and at the same time to allow himself to drift hither and thither before God in his praying. If ever a pastor should carefully arrange his thoughts

beforehand, asking the Spirit's guidance in his preparation, it is when he undertakes to present his flock before the Chief Pastor, voicing for them their manifold desires and needs. No; by extemporaneous prayers I mean prayers that are unwritten, or at least unread. And such prayers, when duly premeditated, are apt to be fresh, specific, appropriate, sympathetic, fervent, unctious. Profoundly convinced as I am of the need and the beauty of liturgical forms of worship, I would never surrender the precious privileges and spiritual worth of extemporaneous prayers in the house of God.

Need of Forms of Devotion.—On the other hand, we need forms of devotion as well as the spirit of devotion. As the flying years bring with them more of experience and observation, the more I shrink from the possible disasters incident to extemporaneous prayers,—for instance, grammatical blunders, tortuous movements, forced retreats, explanatory parentheses, ill-timed allusions, unfortunate reminiscences, oblivions as unfortunate, unintentional exaggerations, personal idiosyncrasies, capricious moods, theological processes, conscious mentalities, in one word, egoism. And therefore I thank the Master of Assemblies that he has at sundry times and in divers manners moved saintly men of all communions to provide prayers for the use of his church,—prayers which are choice in thought, brief in statement, comprehensive in range, manifold in variety, specific in details, reverent in expression, hallowed in associations, reverend in antiquity. For prayers, like hymns, are the common heritage of all Christ's people in all lands and all times and all communions. Our brethren of the Greek Church have no

more right to monopolize the prayer of St. Chrysostom, beginning, "Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee," than our brethren of the Methodist Church have a right to monopolize Charles Wesley's hymn beginning, "Jesus, lover of my soul." If it is right to praise God by joining together in singing the same hymns, why is it not right to pray to God by joining together in saying the same prayers? Is prayer less solemn than praise? Why take such pains to elaborate our written sermons before finite and sinful men, and yet presume to extemporize our prayers before infinite and sinless God? Of whom shall we be the more afraid,—those who can kill the body, but who cannot kill the soul; or him who can destroy both soul and body in hell? Yea, I say to you, Fear Him.

Beware of Ritual Slavery.—But while all this is true, we must take care lest in our use of collects and liturgical prayers we allow ourselves to become slaves to a ritual. Laws which change not may have become heathen Medes and Persians; they hardly become the followers of the King of kings, for where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. Appropriate, beautiful, devout, uplifting as the collects are, they must not be allowed to supplant freedom of emotion and expression. Minister and people must stand fast here in the freedom with which Christ made us free, lest we be held again with some yoke of bondage which our liturgical fathers may have imposed.

Value of Flexible Liturgy.—Having thus insisted on the right of Christian liberty in the matter of liturgy, I feel free to say that, while extemporaneous prayers and liturgical

prayers are both allowable, they are hardly equally allowable, my judgment leaning, in the majority of cases, to the use of appropriate and hallowed formulas. Doubtless the wisest course here is to have a liturgy which is flexible, judiciously blending the stateliness of ancient formulas and the tenderness of modern adjustments.

Review. — Glancing back at the territory through which we have sped, let me reindicate some of the points where we halted for special inspections. We have seen that worship is a human instinct; that the God of Revelation made provision for this instinct in his liturgy for ancient Israel; that Israel's liturgy was abolished under and in Christ; that, notwithstanding this abolition, forms of worship are still indispensable; that liturgy is a question of degree rather than of substance; that devotions are the chief parts of worship; that worship in non-liturgical churches tends to be vicarious; that we must guard against vain repetitions; that the Pattern Prayer is our divine model for worship; that the two chief elements of worship are praise and prayer; that music is the natural outlet of praise; that the Psalter is the church's chief praise-book; that chanting is the noblest form of church music; that extemporaneous prayers have certain immense advantages of freshness, adaptedness, personality, sympathy, fervor, unction; that liturgical prayers have also certain immense advantages of variety, brevity, specialty, reverence, preciousness, and, above all, concord.

Summary. — To sum up as compactly as possible. Worship in non-liturgical churches should have a liturgy that is flexible, thus joining the stability of the golden altar with the mobility of its soaring incense. So shall the two pil-

lars of our praise and prayer in the temple of our God be called "Jachin" (that is, "He shall establish") and "Boaz" (that is, "In it is strength").

Daily Character the True Liturgy.—After all, daily life is the true worship; daily character is the true liturgy. Listen to Jerusalem's great Pastor:—

A pure and undefiled religious service before God and the Father is this: To visit orphans and widows in their affliction; to keep himself unspotted from the world. — *James* 1 : 27.

There are in this loud, stunning tide
Of human care and crime,
With whom the melodies abide
Of the everlasting chime;
Who carry music in their heart
Through dusky lane and mart,
Plying their daily task with busier feet,
Because their secret souls a holy strain repeat.

— KEBLE'S *Christian Year*.

CHAPTER VIII

MODERN PROBLEM OF CHURCH POLITY

Three Church Polities. — The chief ecclesiastical polities or governments of Protestant Christendom may be reduced to three: the Episcopal, or hierarchical; the Presbyterian, or representative; the Congregational, or democratic. Each of these three polities rests on a basis which is more or less Scriptural; for the champions of each polity can quote a supporting Scripture. Each polity has its own peculiar advantages, and its own peculiar disadvantages; and the problem is to try to decide whether the advantages in any given case outweigh the disadvantages, or *vice versa*.

The Episcopal Polity. — The Episcopal polity has the advantages of comprehension, supervision, unity, etc. But it has the disadvantage of temptation to autocracy.

The Presbyterian Polity. — The Presbyterian polity has the advantages of coherence, energy, executiveness, etc. But it has the disadvantage of temptation to oligarchy.

The Congregational Polity. — The Congregational polity has the advantage of democracy, or "government of the people, by the people, for the people." But it has the disadvantage of being against the analogies of living nature; few living things are absolutely "independent."

Adjust Polity to Environment. — Since the New Testament does not settle this question of church polity, but leaves us free here, what are we to do? Adjust ourselves to what we call "providential circumstances"; for exam-

ple, our environment, our best opportunity for doing the most good, etc. If we cannot have the polity of our choice, we must accept the polity which under the circumstances we think will be most serviceable to our King, becoming all things to all men, that we may by all means save some.

Problem of Church Officers.—The same thing, substantially speaking, must be said about the modern problem of church officers. Modern problem, I say; for the New Testament is not sufficiently clear on this point to decide the question for us; much can justly be said on both sides as to the question of elders, presbyters, bishops, deacons, etc. One thing is certain; apostles and prophets as special gifts to the primitive church have vanished, probably forever. But we still have need of evangelists, pastors, teachers, overseers, elders, deacons. We need such post-apostolic officers as trustees, wardens, professors, chaplains, class-leaders, etc. In brief, whatever any church needs in way of effective administration, that the church should appoint as her official minister or servant.

Special Need of Deaconesses.—Let me emphasize our need of a special class of ministering women. A certain Scripture is in point:—

I commend to you Phœbe our sister, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchræa; that ye receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of saints, and assist her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself also has been a helper of many, and of myself. —
Romans 16: 1, 2.

Now the word here translated “servant” is precisely the same word which in the opening verse of the Letter to the Philippians is translated “deacon”:—

Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons. — *Philippians* 1: 1.

I commend to you Phœbe our sister, who is a deacon of the church which is at Cenchræa. — *Romans* 16: 1.

In fact, the two classes of church servants, male and female, are described side by side in Paul's first Letter to Timothy:—

Deacons in like manner must be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of base gain; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them serve as deacons, being without reproach. Women in like manner must be grave, not slanderous, sober, faithful in all things. — 1 *Timothy* 3: 8-11.

Accordingly, the early fathers—for example, Tertulian, Basil, Gregory—speak of the office of deaconess in the early church. We have even the formula of ordination given us in the so-called *Apostolical Constitutions*, thus:—

O Eternal God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Creator of man and of woman, who didst replenish with the Spirit Miriam, and Deborah, and Anna, and Huldah; who didst not disdain that thy only begotten Son should be born of a woman, who also in the tabernacle of the testimony, and in the temple, didst ordain women to be keepers of thy holy gates—do thou now also look down upon this thy servant, who is to be ordained to the office of deaconess, and grant her thy Holy Spirit, and cleanse her from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, that she may worthily discharge the work which is committed to her to thy glory, and the praise of thy Christ, with whom glory and adoration be to thee and the Holy Spirit forever. Amen. *The Apostolical Constitutions*—Book VIII., Section 20.

And even if the office of deaconess did not exist in apostolic times, as there is every reason for believing that it did, there is an abiding necessity for the office in the wants of our human nature. There is a multitude of

delicate offices to be done in and by the church which a woman can do far better than a man. There are a thousand little ways in which woman, like Phœbe at Cenchræa, can be the helper of many.

Woman needs Christian Scope.—However this be, one thing is certain; woman's place in the church needs to be more distinctly recognized. As in apostolic times, and ever since, so now, women constitute the vast majority in the Christian church. Nor is this at all surprising. For woman, in a very special sense, owes a tremendous debt to Jesus Christ. He has been, in a conspicuous degree, her emancipator and uplifter. As in Jesus Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, so in Jesus Christ there is neither male nor female. In the Son of man, born of woman, man and woman become peers. What, then, shall woman do for the Christ who has done so much for woman? It is an intensely practical question; for women, let me say again, constitute the vast majority in the church. What, then, shall woman do for Jesus? This question comes home with thrilling force to many an earnest soul. There are elect spirits, who, through stress of providential circumstances, such as affliction or bereavement or disappointment, or through temperament, or through an overmastering yearning, feel that the King is summoning them to a special career of consecration. Touching Jesus Christ and his Kingdom, they feel as England's queen felt when she declared that "England was her husband," and "All Englishmen were her children," and that she desired no higher character or fairer remembrance of her should be transmitted to posterity than to have this inscription engraved on her tombstone:—

Here lies Elizabeth, who lived and died a maiden queen. — HUME's *History of England*, Chapter XXXVIII.

Who does not know just such women — noble women who are yearning for some way to be opened by which they may be enabled to devote themselves to our King and his Kingdom? And our King's voice to the Christian men of America is this, "Open the way for these women." Here lies a signal instance of the latent, undeveloped resources of Protestantism. Lord Macaulay, speaking of the secret of the success of the Church of Rome, says:—

Even for female agency there is a place in her system. To devout women she assigns spiritual functions, dignities, and magistracies. In our country, if a noble lady is moved by more than ordinary zeal for the propagation of religion, the chance is that, though she may disapprove of no doctrine or ceremony of the Established Church, she will end by giving her name to a new schism. If a pious and benevolent woman enters the cell of a prison to pray with the most unhappy and degraded of her own sex, she does so without any authority from the Church. No line of action is traced out for her; and it is well if the Ordinary does not complain of her intrusion, and if the Bishop does not shake his head at such irregular benevolence. At Rome, the Countess of Huntingdon would have a place in the calendar as St. Selina, and Mrs. Fry would be foundress and first Superior of the Blessed Order of Sisters of the Goal. — MACAULAY'S *Miscellanies*, IV, 335.

Not that I ask in behalf of woman orders and titles, for the world is outgrowing insignia. But I do ask for her a distinct recognition by the church of the fact that there is a certain sphere of service which woman can fill better than man. And God in his providence is opening many such spheres. Witness, for example, the various reformatory and relief societies, the ministrations to the sick and poor and ignorant and abandoned, the zenana service, the call

for maiden missionaries, and the like. And God's voice to the brethren is: "Recognize such women! Set them apart! Supply their wants!" Then would woman become indeed a power in the church vastly surpassing her present. Woman is Heaven's natural evangelist. And so shall she help undo the sad work of the first woman.

The True "Apostolical Succession." — Although the primitive apostles have gone, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Jesus abides, and all true sons of the Kingdom, whether officers or laymen, belong to the true "Apostolical Succession," being an elect race, a holy and kingly priesthood, to show forth the excellencies of him who called them out of darkness into his marvellous light.¹

¹ It would be appropriate, in connection with this study of the modern problem of ecclesiastical administration, to study the modern problem of church finances, including questions of pew-rents, debts, mortgages, taxation, endowments, charities, etc. But the author confesses that he is not competent, as a result of any special study in this direction, to discuss these financial problems, and therefore he wisely lets them alone.

CHAPTER IX

MODERN PROBLEM OF LAY MISSIONARIES

Christianity has its Body-side. — One of the conspicuous signs of our times is the growing recognition of the body-side of Christianity. The church of the past — the church of Athanasius, Augustine, Anselm, Luther, Edwards — busied herself chiefly, and in the main profitably, with theological problems. To her was committed, in the order of Providence, the vast and responsible task of formulating creed-statements of Christianity. Wisely did the thinkers of the past fulfil their great mission. Nevertheless, the Christianity of the past was largely either a metaphysical or an emotional Christianity; a religion of the university, or of the cloister, rather than of the workshop and the market-place. But with the birth of the scientific spirit — a spirit which busies itself with the phenomena and sequences of nature, and the uses to which the natural forces may be applied — the attention of the church began to be directed to the physical needs of mankind. And this new direction of Christian thought and enterprise marks another fresh stage in human history, or the unfolding of God's providential plan. For, philosophize and refine as much as we please, the inexorable fact remains that man's body, at least in the present stage of existence, is as truly a part of him as his spirit. Not only is the body the tenement of the spirit; the body is also the arena of the spirit's activities, the

bodily organs serving as the inlets of sense and the outlets of force, being the very hinges of the soul, on which character turns to and fro, in and out. And Jesus Christ came not to bestow a partial salvation ; he came to save the entire man, man's body not less than man's spirit : —

The God of peace himself sanctify you wholly ; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved whole without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. — 1 *Thessalonians* 5 : 23.

In fact, the resurrection of the body is the culmination of redemption itself : "Waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body." Sensuous and atheistic as the modern materialism tends to be, even this latest materialistic dictum of science is forced by stress of divine Providence to make an immense moral contribution to humanity. For materialism, in the very fact of its making so much of the doctrine of environment, is unconsciously bidding men to take care of their bodies. Viewed in this light, the modern materialism is but a return to the practice of Jesus Christ himself. Let not the profound spirituality of his mission blind us to the fact that one of the chief characteristics of his public ministry was his devotion to physical amelioration. He was, indeed, a preacher and a teacher ; but he was no mere doctrinaire. Recognizing the truth that man's spirit lives, and, so long as the present constitution of things lasts, must live in the body and by means of the body, he treated men practically, approaching them body-wise. In fact, he declared, as we have seen, that the chief credential of his own Christhood was precisely here : —

Go and report to John what ye hear and see. Blind men receive sight, lame walk, lepers are cleansed, deaf hear, dead are raised, poor

men have good tidings preached to them. And happy is he, whoever finds no occasion of stumbling in me. — *Matthew* 11 : 2-6.

And were Jesus the Christ to revisit earth and live in our own land, — a land which, in distinction from ancient Palestine, is a land of Christian civilization, where, under God's good providence, the slower processes of the scientific method have supplanted the swiftness of the ancient miracles, — I doubt not that he would say to his people to-day : —

“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature ; heal the sick, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, found asylums, build schoolhouses, teach the trades, show the natives how to take advantage of God's laws of nature, seek to unfold man in the totality of his being — spirit and soul and body.”

This, then, is our first point in studying the modern problem of Christian Missions.

The Lay Element in the Missionary Field. — And this prepares us for our second and main point : The lay element in the missionary field.

Here let me pay a moment's tribute to our missionaries. Surveying them in the mass, never was there a more heroic, self-sacrificing band of Christian men and women. They have planned wisely, toiled laboriously, suffered patiently, and in many instances reaped gloriously. But faithful as they have been, they could not do everything ; and so they have wisely confined themselves in the main to strictly evangelistic labors. All thanks and honor be offered to them !

But now the question arises : Do not the signs of the times, that is to say, the hints of divine Providence, indicate that the hour has come when the church must consider

the query whether she ought not to make an onward movement in this direction, and reënforce our noble missionary preachers and teachers with noble missionary laymen? For the distinction between the orders of the ministry and the laity is merely modal or formal. Morally speaking, the humblest layman is as truly a priest of the Most High God as his pastor or his bishop. And even this technical, official distinction of ministry and laity is lessening every year. The education of the masses is raising the laity toward the plane of the ministry. Not but that the ministry is, and ever will be, one of our King's methods for his church. While earthly time lasts, the church will need preachers, teachers, leaders of religious thought, formulators of Christian truth; in a single word, "*episcopoi*," that is, overseers. In this sense it is true, and always will be in this world, that "the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and men should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of Jehovah of Hosts." And, therefore, at the very time that I join with my fellow-Christians in pleading for the higher education of the laity, I must also plead for the still higher education of the ministry.

Meanwhile, and who does not thank God for it, the laity are becoming more and more a momentous factor in our church life. As their intelligence grows, so grow their benevolence and personal share in church activities. But are they to be limited to giving, and Sunday-school work, and here and there a trusteeship, in the land of their birth? Is it the minister alone whom God summons to a foreign career? Is there not an immense field for lay activities in heathen lands? For heathendom needs not only Christianity, it also needs Christianity in its ideal completeness —

salvation of the entire man, spirit and soul and body. Moreover, and it is useless for us in our ethereal pride to try to deny it, man's moral nature is, practically speaking, the most easily reached through his bodily nature. Accordingly, our Saviour, as we have seen, was wont to approach men body-wise; and we must follow his example. But our missionaries are less or more wholly occupied with preaching and teaching. Here, then, is a magnificent field for the exercise of lay ministries. As the number of heathen converts multiplies, and the care of the churches becomes too exhausting, our missionaries, answering somewhat to the primitive Twelve, are justified in saying to the multitude of the laity in America:—

It is not proper that we should leave the word of God, and minister to tables. But, brethren, look ye out among yourselves men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom ye may appoint over this business. And we will give ourselves to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. — *Acts* 6: 2-4.

It is an encouraging sign of our times that we are sending out so many Christian men and women to serve as physicians. And this is but a sample of the vast latent resources for the missionary field. Why should we not send forth missionary carpenters, engineers, shipbuilders, farmers; with the one hand offering to the natives the gospel of our King, and with the other hand teaching them how to build houses, bridges, ships, telegraphs; how to unfold undreamed capacities of soils; how to enshrine in type an uplifting Christian literature? Why should not the sons of light learn wisdom from the sons of this æon, and make the largest possible use of God's resources? Why should not the Church of the Cross, animated by a diviner

spirit than any military or commercial, emulate the enterprising example of Phœnicia, Greece, Rome, Spain, Holland, France, Great Britain, colonizing heathendom in the interests of Christianity and Immanuel?

Canterbury's Missionary College.—Among the many objects of thrilling interest in Canterbury, England, is what remains of the renowned Abbey of St. Augustine, founded thirteen centuries ago. In the year 1848, a wealthy and intelligent layman bought the ruins, and on the site of them erected a college for the training of the missionaries sent out by the Church of England. As the author wandered about the venerable precincts, he observed with intense interest the comprehensive nature of the training; including, not only theological instruction, but also teaching of the various handicrafts; so that when these young men should go forth to their distant and isolated stations, each one of them might know how to build his own house, make his own clothing, do his own tinkering, print his own books, prescribe his own medicines, etc. Let not young and enterprising America lag behind old and conservative England. Indeed, noble efforts have been inaugurated in this direction. Who knows that the first great foreign missionary did any more effective gospel service in heathen Corinth, when on the sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, than when on the week days he worked with Aquila and Priscilla at their trade of tent-making?

CHAPTER X

MODERN PROBLEM OF CHURCH UNIFICATION

Unification of Christendom a Momentous Problem.—Another problem for the modern church to study is the problem of Ecclesiastical Unity. A complex, serious problem it is, well worthy the profound study of all sons of the Kingdom.

The Ideal Church a Unity.—On the one hand, the ideal church of God, God's one church of transfigured characters, is an ideal unity. St. Paul portrays this ideal unity under a sevenfold aspect, thus :—

There is one body, and one Spirit, as also ye were called in one hope of your calling ; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all. — *Ephesians* 4 : 4-6.

Observe that the great apostle uses the numeral "one" seven times. It is as though he had said :—

"There is ONE Christian Church ; ONE Holy Spirit ; ONE heavenly vocation ; ONE Lord Jesus Christ ; ONE faith in this one Lord Jesus Christ ; ONE baptism in the one Spirit by the one faith into the one church ; ONE All-Father-God."

This churchly unity is also divinely symbolized in such figures as these: Many stones, one temple; many branches, one vine; many folds, one flock; many members, one body; many tribes, one Israel; etc. The ideal spiritual church of God is a divine unity.

The Actual Church a Disunity.—On the other hand, the

actual, organized church of Christendom is a painful disunity. Observe with grief and shame its divided condition. The church ecclesiastical is, literally speaking, a church militant on a war footing. Unfortunately, however, this war footing is an internecine strife. Instead of her wrestling against the dark principalities of the spiritual powers of evil in the heavenlies, she is wrestling against her own flesh and blood, making schism in her own body, tearing asunder the limbs of her own personality. Survey her manifold and bitter divisions and subdivisions; her clashing sects, creeds, politics, rivalries; her shibboleth dins of "I am of Paul!" "I am of Apollos!" "I am of Cephas!" "I am of Christ!" Paradoxical as it sounds, the church militant will never become the church triumphant till she becomes the church pacific. Instead of her being one united Israel of Jehovah of hosts, she is rather a captive and dismembered Israel, her dislocated bones lying scattered in the great valley of this world's Babylonia. And were James the Just or Peter the Rock to return and indite another Epistle General to the church of God, I fear that he would have to address it somewhat as follows:—

"To the twelve tribes which are of the Dispersion, even to the elect sojourners scattered in the Pontus of Baptismalism, the Galatia of Episcopalianism, the Cappadocia of Presbyterianism, the Asia of Methodism, the Bithynia of Lutheranism, greeting."

Evils of Sectarianism.—Who of us does not feel that this is a most deplorable state of things? Consider for a moment some of the evils of sectarianism,—I mean the spirit of sectarianism, not the mere fact that there are sects. Sectarianism, for instance, alienates the Christian Brotherhood, setting the one great family in Christ against each

other; it narrows our spiritual horizon; it inverts the Christian order by exalting ordinances above principles, ritual above character; it caricatures truth by magnifying its fractions and minifying its integer; it dissipates spiritual energies instead of concentrating them; it involves needless expense by rearing and maintaining several kinds of churches in a neighborhood where God would be better served were there but one church; it repels the onlooker, for he will not confess a divided, sectarian Christ; worse than all, sectarianism arrests moral growth. Listen to the master apostle as he expostulates with the sectaries of Corinth:—

Brethren, I was not able to speak to you as spiritual, but as carnal as babes in Christ. I fed you with milk, and not with solid food; for ye were not able yet to bear it; nay, not even now are ye able; for ye are yet carnal. For whereas there is yet among you envying and strife, are ye not carnal, and do ye not walk as men [not as Christians]? For whenever one says, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not men [instead of being Christians]?—1 *Corinthians* 3:1-4.

That is to say, catholicity is the output of maturity, the full costume of manhood; sectarianism is the stair-bar of infancy, the small-clothes of babyhood. Such are some of the many evils of the denominational spirit. Taking everything into account, I am inclined to think that sectarianism is the church's mightiest obstacle in her march to New Jerusalem. For every kingdom divided against itself cannot stand, but must come to desolation. If Messiah's forces are divided, how can his kingdom stand? But let us be fair, not overlooking the true church's real unity. For at all essential points Christ's church,—his church spiritual, whatever the land or age or sect,—is at

bottom sublimely one. And for that church of Christ every true member of it, whether Baptist, Quaker, Romanist, will, if need should arise, be equally ready to die. But, although Christ's church in its essentials is one, men's churches in their incidentals are many and militant. What we quarrel about is not moralities, but ceremonies; not divine commandments, but human ordinances; not God's truth, but men's interpretation of it, that is, men's creeds. Nevertheless, our blessed King has prayed the Father that the members of his body may be perfected into one; and surely he did not pray in vain.

Problem of Ecclesiastical Unity.—And so we pass to ponder the problem of Ecclesiastical Unity. How shall we make the church of man and the church of Christ—the church of form and the church of life—coincident? How shall we adjust man's church to God's Kingdom? How shall we bring about the ideal, promised Unity of the Christian Church? It is a mighty problem, as gracious as mighty, wholly worthy the best thought of Christendom. Although incapable of absolute solution, yet, like the famous problem of squaring the circle, our problem is nevertheless capable of approximations ever closer and closer.

Is the Unification of Christendom Desirable?—But, first of all, is the unification of Christendom desirable? Unification, I say, not "reunion." For I am not aware that Christendom has ever been united in such a way as to make a reunion desirable. The sad fact is, as we have seen (pp. 16–18), that the church of the primitive period, in so far as it was organized at all, instead of having been, as we so often fondly imagine, a concord of brothers, was

largely a discord of wranglers. If the little Christendom of Christ's day was already a union, why did Christ pray that his followers might become one, "perfected into unity"? The truth is, the primitive church, like every other thing of life, began in infantile imperfection, yet subject to the blessed law of growth and perfection. Ideals, always excepting the one Perfect Man, are ever before us, never behind us. The spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. Our question, then, is not, "Is the reunion of Christendom desirable?" But our question is, "Is the unification of Christendom desirable?" To this question I must answer both no and yes. For, while the longing of many of God's chosen spirits for the unification of Christendom is one of the blessed signs of our times, yet it is to be feared that this longing is in many instances as vague as it is deep. Accordingly, one of my principal objects in this chapter is to clear away, so far as possible, the mists which envelop our great problem; and this by showing wherein church unity really consists — what it does not mean as well as what it does mean. For when the mists lift, Jehovah's watchmen will see eye to eye. Let me, then, discuss this problem of church unity both negatively and affirmatively.

And first negatively.

Church Unity cannot be secured by decreeing Church Uniformity.—On the one hand, the church cannot unify herself by decreeing uniformity of outward organization. For observe precisely what church unity means. It does not mean outward uniformity of creed and polity, not even an organized union of churches and sects; that is an artificial combination or mechanical union which can be ordered, and also

revoked, by decrees of councils and by votes of congregational assemblies. On the other hand, church unity does mean an inward, organic, so to speak, divinely biological life wherein all varieties of organs and functions are vitally convergent to one divine end. You can organize an external organization—this is man's work. You cannot organize an internal organism—that is God's work. All attempts therefore to enact ecclesiastical unity, either by decrees of hierarchical conclaves or by votes of congregational assemblies, are attempts at human manufacture rather than recognitions of divine offspring, and therefore must sooner or later issue in moral failures. The truth is, all attempts at singleness or uniformity of formal organization are against all the analogies of living nature. Take the plant world: what varieties of structures and functions from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that springs up by the wall! Take the animal world: all flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another flesh of birds, another flesh of fishes. Take the man world: what varieties of races, statures, faculties, temperaments, customs! Take the church world: what varieties of creeds, polities, gifts, missions, graces! To undertake to decree that there shall be but one kind of church organization is as unnatural and futile as to undertake to decree that there shall be but one kind of plant or one kind of animal or one kind of man. Many different members, but one common body. True, an unvarying uniformity of creed and polity and ritual in all lands and through all times, such as the Church of Rome signally illustrates, is in a certain way very impressive. But there is peril in this very uniformity; and the exacter the uniformity, the greater the

peril. For decrees of concordance or "Acts of Uniformity" imply an autocracy which is more than apt to become despotic. See how, in the case of Rome, the church has tended to supplant the Bible; the Pope, our King. Thus the very uniformity of Romanism (and there is no splendor sample of homogeneousness) is morally perilous, tending to extinguish individualism and to deify churchism, and so annihilating the very idea of unity. No, church unity cannot be secured by decreeing uniformity of organization.

Unity cannot be secured by abolishing Sects. — Nor, again, can the church unify herself, at least in this æon, by abolishing sects. In fact, I believe that each Christian sect, in so far as it really has Christ's own spirit, has a divine mission of its own. Who would wish to erase from the history of Christendom the story of the Waldenses, the Lutherans, the Puritans, the Moravians, the Jansenists, the Methodists, the Congregationalists, the Quakers, the Baptists? Of course, I cannot go into a detailed statement of the mission of each one of the sects. Let me only attempt a swift characterization in roughest outline of the more salient features of the more prominent denominations. A chief distinctive mission of the Roman Catholic branch of Christ's one Church (I mention it first only because it has by far the largest number of members) is, as it seems to me, to give play to the body-side of our nature; and this it does by its appeal to our senses in the way of architecture, statuary, painting, music, colors, forms; and nobly is it fulfilling its sensitive vocation. A chief distinctive mission of the Presbyterian branch of Christ's one Church is to give play to the theological side of our nature; and this it does by the prominence it assigns to creeds and catechetical instruc-

tion ; and nobly is it fulfilling its sturdy vocation. A chief distinctive mission of the Episcopal branch of Christ's one Church is to give play to the worshipful side of our nature ; and this it does by the prominence it assigns to liturgy and æsthetics ; and nobly is it fulfilling its devotional vocation. A chief distinctive mission of the Methodist branch of Christ's one Church is to give play to the active side of our nature ; and this it does by the vigor of its ecclesiastical system and its recognition of the lay element in its class-meetings ; and nobly is it fulfilling its robust vocation. A chief distinctive mission of the Quaker branch of Christ's one Church is to give play to the passive side of our nature ; and this it does by its doctrine of the inner light and by its disuse of forms ; and nobly is it fulfilling its placid vocation. A chief distinctive mission of the Congregational branch of Christ's one Church is to give play to the personal side of our nature ; and this it does by its insistence on the right of each congregation to ecclesiastical independence ; and nobly is it fulfilling its manly vocation. A chief distinctive mission of the Baptist branch of Christ's one Church is to give play to the exacter side of our nature ; and this it does by its demanding literal obedience to what it calls the only Scriptural ordinance of baptism ; and nobly is it fulfilling its stalwart vocation. Thus each of the Christian sects has its own peculiar mission ; and each, I doubt not, would be benefited by some absorption of the peculiarities of the others. I am quite sure that we Baptists (and this without abating one jot or tittle of our distinctive mission) would not be harmed by a little infusion of the Presbyterian polity, the Episcopalian æsthetics, the Methodist discipline, the Quaker simplicity. For all things are ours ;

whether Paul, the apostle of advance, or Cephas, the apostle of arrest, or Apollos, the apostle of culture; all are ours; and we are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

Unity cannot be secured by Compromise.—Nor, once more, and most decidedly, can the church unify herself by compromise. This is the mistake of those unfortunates who are afflicted with cardiac hypertrophy or diseased enlargement of heart. Compromise is often right in matters of policy or method. Compromise is always wrong in matters of principle or duty. Truth abhors compromise as light abhors darkness. Truth advances her kingdom by affirmation, not by evasion; by victory, not by surrender. If there is in all this world a sacred right, it is the right of every human being to have his own moral convictions. If there is in all this world a sacred responsibility, it is the responsibility which every human being has before his God and before his fellows for those convictions. If there is in all this world a sacred obligation, it is the obligation which rests on every human being to be true, at whatever cost, to those convictions. For the man who is willing to surrender his own convictions for the sake of "unity" is a man whose convictions for the sake of unity, or of anything else, are to be distrusted. For he who begins with being false to himself will end with being false to everybody else. Moreover, the unity which is brought about by compromise is not unity at all; it is only a weak, sentimental, flabby uniformity. The boneless, pulpy compromiser, like a composite photograph in which every sign of individuality is merged, looks remarkably kind, and also remarkably weak. No, unity cannot be secured by compromise.

Unity can be secured only by Comprehension.—How, then, shall the church unify herself? And so, affirmatively, the church must unify herself by comprehension. Here was the grievous mistake of the beloved disciple when he said to his divine Teacher:—

Master, we saw one casting out demons in thy name; and we forbade him, because he follows not with us. — *Luke 9: 49.*

It was the outburst of an intense sectarianism. It mattered not to John that this stranger was really doing a blessed service in Christ's name. The trouble was that he did not belong to St. John's little coterie; he was marching under a sort of independent flag. That was enough to condemn him; the Master had no use for irregular outsiders.

But Jesus said, Forbid him not; for there is no one who shall do a miracle in my name, and be able quickly to speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is for us. For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in the name that ye are Christ's, verily I say to you, he shall in no wise lose his reward. And whoever causes one of these little ones that believe on me to stumble, it is better for him if a great millstone is hanged about his neck, and he is cast into the sea. — *Mark 9: 38-42.*

It is as though our King had said:—

"No one who is really doing good in my name—in the sphere of my character and work—can be false to me. I even declare that he who does not array himself against me is really on my side. Whoever does any service, however slight, shall have a heavenly reward; but whoever, by harsh treatment, causes one of these little ones or outsiders who love me, however obscure, to fall into sin, it were better for him that he had suffered a felon's death. Instead, then, of repelling yonder stranger, you ought to have bidden him God-speed."

You see, then, our Master's attitude in this matter of comprehension. The coming unity of his church is to be secured, not by exclusion, but by inclusion.

"But to what extent would you include?" I hear you asking. To the extent of our King's horizon, I reply; including anybody and everybody, of whatever sect or of no sect at all, who can be described by that august word, "Christian"; or, as the apostle Paul expresses it, "All that call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, theirs and ours."

I will not ask my neighbor of his creed;
Nor what he deems of doctrine old or new;
Nor what rites his honest soul may need
To worship God — the only wise and true;
Nor what he thinks of the anointed Christ;
Nor with what baptism he has been baptized.

I ask not what temptations have beset
His human heart, now self-abased and sore;
Nor by what wayside well the Lord he met;
Nor where was uttered, "Go, and sin no more."
Between his soul and God that business lies;
Not mine to cavil, or despise.

I ask not by which name, among the rest
That Christians go by, he is named or known;
Whether his faith has ever been "professed,"
Or whether proven by his deeds alone;
So there be Christhood in him, all is well;
He is my brother, and in peace we dwell.

If grace and patience in his actions speak,
Or fall in words of kindness from his tongue,
Which raise the fallen, fortify the weak,
And heal the heart by sorrow rent and wrung;
If he give good for ill, and love for hate —
Friend of the friendless, poor and desolate —

I find in him discipleship so true,
So full, that nothing further I demand.

He may be bondman, freedman, Gentile, Jew ;
 But we are brothers — walk we hand in hand.
 In his white life let me the Christhood see ;
 It is enough for him, enough for me. — *Anonymous.*

Now this idea of comprehension is the modern contribution to ecclesiology or the doctrine of the church. The old method was to search for similarities ; the new method is to recognize diversities. The church's true policy here is not rejection, but adjustment ; not insistence, but assistance ; not as Paul and Barnabas angrily parted at Antioch, but as Abraham and Lot peacefully parted at Bethel ; not as John, who cried, "Forbid !" but as Jesus, who replied, "Welcome !" not as cave-dwellers moping in solitude, but as cosmopolitans living in God's open air. O ye Christian sectarians ; ye who are dwelling in dark glens of denominationalism ; ye who, like Elijah in his cave, imagine that you alone are Jehovah's true prophets ; ye who live in the hamlet of your sect, and

"Think the rustic cackle of your bourg
 The murmur of the world" —

come out from your dark little glen into the sunlight of God's open country, and see how vast is the dome of his sky.

Catholicity the Ideal Church Form. — But how shall this unity by comprehension be effected ? And so I pass to present for a moment catholicity as the ideal church form. For, as we have seen, each Christian sect, in so far as it has Christ's own spirit, does have its own divine mission. Each Christian sect is a facet in God's great diamond of truth, flashing prismatic hues, the union of which makes the dazzling white light. It is not given to any one man or to any one set of men, however great, to comprehend

all truth ; for, if it were, men themselves would be infinite. Accordingly, while sectarianism is born of sin, and is devilish, sect is born of finiteness, and may be even angelic. Do not try, then, to secure unity by hammering diversities into monotonous flatness. But try to secure unity by soaring high enough to comprehend diversities, even as God's own sky comprehends ocean and forest, valley and mountain, man and flower.

As a matter of fact, each denomination, in rearing its own ecclesiastical structure, does work selectively. That is to say, each sect, in building its own creed or polity, builds on the remembrance of certain Scriptures which it regards as favorable, and on the oblivion of certain other Scriptures which it regards as unfavorable ; equally skilled in the art of remembering and in the art of forgetting ; dexterously adjusting its powers of memory and its powers of oblivion to the supposed necessities of the case. In other words, each sect errs not so much in what it believes as in what it fails to believe. The coming ideal church will be built, not on a selection of Scriptures, but on the Bible in its wholeness. Can there be any better way of bringing about the unification of Christendom than by the occasional and considerate interchange of different Scriptural views by representative Christian thinkers of all communions ? If the church is ever to be perfected into one, that perfection will be effected, not by resolutions of conventions or decrees of councils, but by the gradual permeation of Christian sentiments throughout Christendom.

The Coming Ideal Church. — A certain thing is this : the coming ideal church will neither be wholly Baptist

nor Episcopal nor Methodist nor Presbyterian nor Roman nor Quaker; but it will be Catholic with "Roman" left out. For Christianity, or the Kingdom of God, is larger than any denominational province in it, even as the United States is larger than the state of Pennsylvania. Christ's body is larger than any one member of it. Our Lord Jesus has but one body; he is not a monster. Denominationalism still has its place in the economy of Christendom. But that place is no longer in the foreground; that place henceforth is to be in the background. We are still to work along denominational lines; but we are to work along denominational lines only with a view to the Church as a Whole. Christians are not *dissecta membra*; they are members one of another, and there is but one divine Body. Is Christ divided? Can Satan dismember that sacred body, and toss one member into the camp of the Baptists, a second member into the camp of the Methodists, a third into the camp of the Presbyterians? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into the name of Peter, or Luther, or Calvin, or Wesley, or Fox, or Bunyan, or Swedenborg? No, One is your Master, and all ye are brothers; fellow-members of that one body of which Christ is the one Head. And fellow-members are coördinate. The eye is a member of the body, and a very important member; but was the eye created to gaze only in a mirror and see nothing but the image of itself? The ear is another very important member of the body; but what becomes of its importance if it is separated from the body? All the worth it has lies in the fact that it is a part of the body and ministers to it. If the whole church were only one gigantic Congregational eye, or one colossal Methodist

ear, or one stupendous Episcopal hand, or one enormous Presbyterian thumb, or one measureless Baptist foot—where were Christ's one, yet many-membered body? But now they are many members, yet but one body. Accordingly, the Episcopal eye cannot say to the Baptist hand, I have no need of thee; or again, the Pontifical head to the Lutheran feet, I have no need of you. For all Christians form the one body of Christ, and each Christian is a functional member thereof; and the one body of Christ is healthy and effective in proportion as each Christian faithfully discharges his own organic functions, all the members, whether eye or hand, ear or foot, sinew or nerve, bone or cell, working together in reciprocal coöperation.

Our Problem Momentous.—Our problem is indeed momentous. I am quite aware that this struggling after the unification of Christendom is often sneered at as a girlish sentimentalism, unworthy the sturdy muscle of denominational champions, contending earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints. But does it never occur to these redoubtable knights of the faith delivered once for all to the saints that this ancient faith meant, and still means, chiefly this: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;" there being no other commandment than these, since "on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets"? Do these doughty warriors of the primitive orthodoxy never catch a glimpse of the majestic truth that the whole law is summed up in this royal commandment, namely, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," this love being itself the very "bond of perfectness?"

I'm apt to think the man
That could surround the sum of things, and spy
The heart of God and secrets of his empire,
Would speak but love. With him the bright result
Would change the hue of intermediate scenes,
And make one thing of all theology. — *Anonymous.*

This matter, then, of the unification of Christendom is more than a mere sentiment or sweet privilege; like humility or prayer or faith, it is not even a matter of option; it is the most imperial of the commandments. If you insist on the word "ordinance," Love is the Ordinance of the ordinances. Now abides faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love. And no wonder; for God himself is love, so that he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

Auspicious Auguries. — Let us be grateful that we are living under happy auguries. The growing catholicity of our times, as indicated by such expressions as these: international arbitration; international law; international congresses for securing a common standard of time, of distance, of weight, of money, of signals; international Sunday-school lessons; the world's fairs; the world's week of prayer; the numerous union societies throughout Christendom; the Evangelical Alliance; Young Men's Christian Associations; Christian Endeavor Societies; King's Sons; King's Daughters; the McAll Mission; Federation of Churches; the overtures of a liturgical church and the responses of at least some non-liturgical churches; the interdenominational salutations and reciprocities; the growing observance of ecclesiastical comity in mission fields; the letters of commendation and transfer from one denomination to another; the marked tendency

toward coöperation in Christian reforms and charities throughout the world; the recent recognition of the Sunday before Christmas as the universal Peace Sunday; the already well-nigh observance of Sunday itself as the world's common Sabbath; the growing disposition to maximize the points wherein the sects agree, and to minimize the points wherein the sects differ; in brief, the growing impulse to pursue the things which make for peace, and things by which one may build up another,—all this, and such as this, is auspicious of the happy day when Ephraim shall no longer envy Judah, and Judah shall no longer vex Ephraim. And in that day of everlasting amity, all Christians, of whatever sect, will be “Low-churchmen,” because true to man; all will be “High-churchmen,” because true to God; all will be “Broad-churchmen,” because true to God and to man. Or, to borrow phrases from European parliaments, all Christians will belong to the “Right,” and all will belong to the “Left,” and all will belong to the “Centre”; because the Lord of the Kingdom—himself the Master of Assemblies—is alike centre, radius, circumference. Then shall all earth become one Jerusalem, and all days one perpetual Pentecost, wherein the unity of mankind, lost at Babel, shall be restored in Jesus, and all men shall again be of one language.

Heaven grant us the blessedness of seeing with our own eyes what many prophets and righteous men have from the beginning longed to see, namely, one Christian Church throughout the world, even

THE ONE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THE SON OF GOD.

CHAPTER XI

PICTURE OF THE MATURING CHURCH

Retrospective Survey. — We have been studying, it must be confessed with imperfect success, first, the Church as a Primitive Society, noting its gradual evolution, its many noble virtues, its many ignoble vices. We have studied, secondly, the Church as a Modern Problem, pondering the problem of church adjustments, the problem of church membership, the problem of baptism, the problem of the Lord's Supper, the problem of church creeds, the problem of church liturgy, the problem of church polity, the problem of church missions, the problem of church unification. And now let us glance forward, studying St. Paul's picture of the maturing church:—

The Maturing Church. — He gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, some as pastors and teachers; unto the perfecting of the saints for the work of ministration, for the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; that we may no longer be babes, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of teaching, in the sleight of men, in cunning craftiness according to the wily manner of error; but speaking the truth, may in love grow up in all things into him, who is the head, Christ; from whom all the body, fitly framed together and compacted by means of every joint of the supply, according to the working of each single part in its measure, is effecting the increase of the body to the upbuilding of itself in love.—*Ephesians* 4: 11-16.

It is a difficult paragraph to explain in some of its details, but its general drift is clear. It sets forth the slow growth of the church under the figure of a physiological organism, maturing until perfected in the sphere of Jesus Christ. It is as though our apostle had said :—

“I have just spoken of the diversity of gifts which our ascended King has bestowed on his church. Among these gifts is his gift of the apostles or special messengers, serving as his envoys and direct representatives. Again, there is his gift of the prophets ; men who being specially moved by the influence of the Holy One are our King’s special spokesmen, speaking the things pertaining to his Kingdom. Again, there is his gift of the evangelists, bringers of the good tidings, heralds of his salvation, missionaries of his manger and cross and throne. Once more, there is his gift of pastors and teachers, teaching shepherds of his flock. And the purpose of these various gifts—these personal representatives, these inspired spokesmen, these joyful heralds, these shepherding educators—is to perfect Christ’s people in personal character, presenting every man perfect in Christ ; and this, not for their own sakes, but for the sakes of others, equipping Christ’s people for their office of service to mankind, perfecting themselves by their own ministering to others ; thus building up of the body of Christ, contributing to the growth and maturity of the one great Christian Church. For this great Christian Church has before her a majestic goal to reach ; until we all, whether officers or laity, whether Jews or non-Jews, attain to the spiritual unity which the one trust in the one Lord brings about ; and not only the unity of the faith, but also the unity of the knowledge of the Son of God, for it is the knowledge of Jesus Christ himself as gained through our personal intimacy with him which is the grand means of the Christian unity ; a full-grown, perfected Christian character ; to the plenitude of all Christian perfections, even the fulness of him who fills all in all ; for the Church is the true bride of Christ ; Christ loved the Church, and delivered himself up for her ; that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the bathing of water in the word, that he might himself present to himself the Church, glorious, not having a spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that she may be holy and without blemish. Or to change for a moment my figure of speech ; that we may no longer be infants in Christian understanding, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every

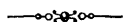
wind of teaching, for false teachers are as veering as ocean gusts ; in the deceitful dexterity of professional dice-throwers ; in cunning craftiness according to the wily manner of error, for error tends to organization with the express purpose of deceiving. But dealing truly, doing the truth, may in love, for love is the sphere of truth, mature, in all things, for our Christian growth must be complete and symmetric in every respect, into him, who is the head, Christ ; for Christ himself is alike our standard of life, our goal of attainment, the secret of our incorporation into his body, the secret of our assimilation of his character ; for the Father of glory, as I have already said, gave Jesus Christ to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him who fills all in all, the boundless receptacle of his measureless amplitudes. From whom, as being the head, and so the organizing force, each and every limb and organ, accurately jointed, symmetrically adjusted, compacted in healthful solidity, by means of every connection of supply from the one head, according to the working of each single part in its measure, for each Christian has his own place and function in Christ's one body, is effecting the growth of the body to the upbuilding of itself, the growth being constant, functional, organic, symmetric, vigorous ; in *love*, for love is the very life-blood of the church."

Such is St. Paul's conception of the maturing church ; it involves majesty of goal ; diversity of means ; constancy of growth ; unity of all Christians in Christ ; in sum, perfection in the sphere of Jesus Christ.

Thus the apostle Paul has ascended, as it were unconsciously, from surveying the church as a human organization to surveying the Church as a Divine Ideal. And so we are led to the third part of our treatise: The Church as a Divine Ideal.

PART THIRD

THE CHURCH AS A DIVINE IDEAL



CHAPTER I

VARIOUS MEANINGS OF THE WORD "CHURCH"

"Ecclesia" an Instance of Verbal Transfiguration.—Archbishop Trench, in his *New Testament Synonyms*, instances the use of the Greek noun "ἐκκλησία" (from which comes our English adjective "ecclesiastical," and which is translated "church"), as a fine example of the power of Christianity to ennoble, not only language in general, but also particular words. Notice the steps by which this word "ἐκκλησία" rises in moral dignity. First, there is the primary Greek sense, meaning a legally convoked assembly; as when the citizens of Athens gathered in "ἐκκλησία," that is, town-meeting, or when the town-clerk of Ephesus counselled the mob to submit the affair of Demetrius against Paul to the decision of the "ἐκκλησία," that is, the lawful assembly (Acts 19:39). Secondly, there is the Hebrew or rather the Septuagint sense, meaning Jehovah's covenant people; as when Moses chanted in the ears of all the "ἐκκλησία," that is, the assembly of Israel, his farewell song (Deut. 31:30), or when the martyr Stephen in his plea before the Sanhedrin alluded to ancient Israel as

the "*ἐκκλησία*" or assembly in the wilderness (Acts 7:38). Thirdly, there is the New Testament or Christian sense, meaning an organized band of Christians; as when we read of the "*ἐκκλησία*" or assembly which was in Jerusalem (Acts 8:1), or the "*ἐκκλησία*" or assembly which was in Smyrna (Rev. 2:8). And when we have gained this noble height to which Christianity carries up this originally pagan word, we find a second series of moral ascents. There is, first, as just hinted, a particular company of Christians banded together in a definite place; as when we read of the "*ἐκκλησία*" or assembly in the house of Prisca and Aquila (Rom. 16:5), or the "*ἐκκλησία*" in the house of Philemon (Philem. 2). There is, secondly, the entire aggregate of professing Christians; as when St. Paul speaks of having persecuted the "*ἐκκλησία*" of God (Gal. 1:13), or writes to Timothy how he ought to conduct himself in the "*ἐκκλησία*" of the living God (1 Tim. 3:16). And there is, lastly, the spiritual company or ideal corporation of all Christians—including the saints in heaven and the saints on earth and the saints to come, as when the Lord of the Kingdom speaks of his rock-founded "*ἐκκλησία*" or assembly (Matt. 16:18), or the writer of the Letter to the Hebrews speaks of the general assembly and "*ἐκκλησία*" of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven (Heb. 12:23). Thus this word "*ἐκκλησία*," translated "church," is a noble instance of verbal transfiguration, showing how our King does indeed make all things new, infusing into the originally secular idea of a lawful assembly of Greek citizens the new and exalted idea of a universal and celestial society, even Christ's own body, the fulness of him who fills all in all.

Hitherto we have been using the word "church " in its lower sense, meaning the church as a human ecclesiastical organization. We now proceed to use the word " church " in its highest sense, meaning the Church as a divine spiritual organism.

CHAPTER II

DISTINGUISH BETWEEN "A CHURCH" AND "THE CHURCH"

BUT before proceeding further, and in order to think and state clearly, we must emphasize some of the differences between a church in the sense of a human organization and the Church in the sense of a Divine Organism.

"A Church." — On the one hand, an organized church is a voluntary association, dependent on conditions of place and time and form. It is a human institution, organized by definite persons at a definite time in a definite locality. It has its own terms of admission, retention, dismissal, exclusion. It has its own purposes, creed, ordinances, officers, rules, discipline, appliances, relations. It may be rent by dissensions; it may suffer even extinction. It acts on itself legislatively and executively, receiving, dismissing, excluding, its members according to its own will. The relation between its components is constructed and temporal. In brief, a church is a human organization. It is the earthly side of Christianity, as the Kingdom of God is its heavenly side. In other words, we can alter a church; we cannot alter the Church.

"The Church." — On the other hand, the Church Organic is a Divine Society, independent of conditions of place and time and form. It was never "constituted" in human time and space; it was prepared from the founda-

tion of the world, having immortality for its birthright and creation for its heirloom. Its citizens are not enfranchised into it by baptism or by letters of transfer from any human ecclesia; its citizens are incorporate, essential, living parts of it. Being that spiritual Kingdom of which Jesus is the spiritual King, there is between him and his Church community of sentiment, thought, experience, purpose, movement—in a single word, life. And this ideal Church, or Kingdom of God, surveyed as a whole in and by itself, has never had any outward, formal organization. True, it has its creed; but this creed is not engraved in any stone tablets of theological symbols; this creed is written with the Spirit of the living God in tablets that are hearts of flesh. It has its condition of citizenship; but this condition is neither heredity nor baptism nor vote of those already citizens; this condition is personal loyalty to the Divine Father, as revealed in Jesus Christ his Son, through demonstration of the Holy Spirit. It has its citizen-registry; but this registry no mortal eye has seen; this registry is the Lamb's scroll of life. It has its Sabbath; but this Sabbath is no chronological sabbath of twenty-four hours; this Sabbath is the eternal Sabbath-rest which remains to the people of God. It has its sessions; but these sessions are not held in any structures of wood or stone; these sessions are held in the heavenly realms in Jesus Christ. It has its pastor; but this pastor has never been ordained by any earthly presbytery; this pastor is the minister of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. It has its music; but this music is not the audible melody of solo or chorus; this music is the silent rhythm of human works and divine grace. It has

its baptism; but this baptism is not in earthly water; this baptism is in the Holy Spirit. It has its communion; but this communion is not in any earthly bread and wine; this communion is in the living bread and the living water that came down from heaven. It has its polity; but this polity is not the polity of any written constitution; this polity is the polity of holy living and godliness. It has its liturgy; but this liturgy is not the liturgy of rubric; this liturgy is the liturgy of daily character. Take all these things away—take away creed, citizen-roll, Sabbath, sanctuary, minister, music, baptistery, communion table, liturgy, discipline. What have you taken away? You have taken away only what is outward, formal, incidental, transient; the Church or Kingdom of the living God, in all the essentials of its nature, still survives.

Need of Churches.—Not that I would for a moment hint that we do not need ecclesiastical organizations. These we must have, and must strenuously maintain; for they are, at least in this world or æon, essential, not only to the spread of Christianity, but also to the preservation of the Christian life itself. Indeed, I am almost ready to affirm that without churches or ecclesiastical organizations we could hardly have the Church or Kingdom of God. In fact, all life tends to organization, even as all death tends to disorganization. Accordingly, a church in the sense of human organization may be as truly a divine institution as the Kingdom of God itself. He who is too good for a human church is not good enough for the Divine Church. In short, a church is our King's appointed means to the Church of God or Kingdom of Heaven.

The Church Larger than a Church.—Nevertheless, the

Church or Kingdom of God is a larger and diviner thing than even the churches or ecclesiastical organizations of the apostolic period. The Church of God, that is, God's Kingdom, is the corporation of re-born characters, the body of Jesus Christ, the Kingdom of Heaven.

Importance of our Distinction. — I have dwelt thus long on these points because this distinction between a church as a human organization and the Church as a Divine Organism is of the utmost consequence, doctrinally and practically. For this word "church" is so ambiguous that, unless we use it discriminatingly, the spirit of a remark or even the tenor of a whole treatise may be entirely misconceived, and therefore misrepresented. Let us, then, cherish the habit of using this term "church" scrupulously, ever carefully distinguishing between a church organized and the Church Organic; between a church local and the Church Universal; between a church visible and the Church Ideal; between a church constructed, which is man's fabric, and the Church Born, which is God's own Kingdom.

Having thus distinguished as clearly as possible between a church as a human organization and the Church as a Divine Organism, we proceed to devote the third part of our book to study of the Church as a Divine Ideal.

"The Church in the Wilderness." — This ideal Church of God was foreshadowed, although but dimly, in the vocation of the Hebrew nation, or as the martyr Stephen expressly calls it, "The ecclesia [church] in the wilderness." Jehovah said to Moses on Sinai: —

Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel;

Ye have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure to me [mine own possession] from among [above] all peoples; for all the earth is mine; and ye shall be to me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. — *Exodus* 19: 3-6.

But Israel proved false to her divine vocation, and therefore forfeited her prerogative of becoming Jehovah's consecrated nationality, or ideal church. Nevertheless the firm foundation of God stands, having this twofold seal:—

The Lord knows those who are his ;

and,

Let every one that names the name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness. — *2 Timothy* 2: 19.

Accordingly, the apostle Peter, writing to the Christian sojourners of the Dispersion scattered in Asia Minor, uses language manifestly suggested by Jehovah's covenant with the church in the wilderness:—

But ye are an elect race, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a people for a possession; that ye should show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; who once were not a people, but are now God's people; who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. — *1 Peter* 2: 9, 10.

The Two Churches. — Here, then, are the two churches, — the earthly church of Moses, and the heavenly Church of Jesus. Thus we ascend from type to antitype; from the formal to the essential; from the local to the universal; from the transient to the immortal; from the means to the end; from the church in the wilderness to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven.

Scriptural Designations of God's Ideal Church.—This ideal Church of God is set forth in the New Testament under various designations and symbols; for example, the kingdom of God, the salt of the earth, the light of the world, the temple of God, the body of Christ, the church of the first-born, the kingly priesthood, the Lamb's bride, the New Jerusalem, etc. Let us proceed to study some of these titles.

CHAPTER III

THE CHURCH OF THE KING'S ROCK

HAVING come into the region of Cæsarea Philippi, Jesus asked his disciples, saying, Who do men say that the Son of Man is? And they said, Some, John the Baptizer; others, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. He says to them, But who do ye say that I am? And Simon Peter answering said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answering said to him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood did not reveal it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I also say to thee, that thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.—*Matthew 16: 13-19.*

This language is not only remarkable in itself; it is especially significant because it is the only occasion, excepting one, on which the Lord of the Kingdom himself used this term, "ecclesia" (church). Let us, then, study it with special carefulness.¹

Peter's Confession.—Simon Peter answering said to Jesus, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." It was Peter's twofold confession: first, his confession of the Messiahship of Jesus, "Thou art the Christ;" and,

¹ The author has discussed this paragraph in his previous volume entitled, *The Kingdom* (pages 263-270). Pertinent and vital as the discussion was in that volume, it is even more pertinent and vital in this. That volume treated of "The Kingdom," this volume treats of "The Church." Accordingly, the author reproduces at this point the substance of the former study.

secondly, his confession of the Christ's divine origin and relation, "The Son of the living God." As such, Peter's confession was intensely personal, clear, emphatic, comprehensive, profound, adoring. No wonder that Jesus answering said, "Happy art thou, Simon son of John; for flesh and blood (capacities merely human) did not disclose it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven."

Peter, Rock. — And now Jesus would confess his confessor: "And I also say to thee, that thou art Peter (*πέτρος*, stone, rock, ledge, cliff); and on this rock (*πέτρα*, rock, ledge, cliff) I will build." It is a notable instance of what the rhetoricians call "paronomasia," or play upon words. For, although Jesus was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, yet he was the most perfect of men, and therefore the most natural of men. As such he must have been endowed with an exquisite humor, for humor is a natural endowment of all greatest souls; recall David, Luther, Lincoln. Beware of the triste, doleful, unnaturally lugubrious Christs of mediæval art. "Peter, thou art rock; and on this rock I will build." Not on rock-like Peter alone, not on Peter's rock-like confession alone; but on both rock-like Peter and on Peter's rock-like confession the King will build his rock-like church. For Peter's own stalwart personality and his sublime confession that Jesus the Nazarene is the long-promised Messiah, even Jehovah's own infinite Son — this is, indeed, the solid granite ledge on which our King is rearing his spiritual ecclesia or church of redeemed humanity, his *basileia* or kingdom of transfigured mankind. "Peter, thou alike in thy name, in thyself, and in thy confession, art rock; and on this rock I will build —"

The King's Ecclesia.—“My ἐκκλησία, my church.” What did our King mean by this word “ἐκκλησία, church?” Observe: the question is not, What does “church” mean to us in our day? But the question is, What did “church” mean to Jesus and Peter at Cæsarea Philippi? We have no right to inject a nineteenth-century meaning into a first-century word. Remember that we have no Scripture evidence, according to the oldest texts, that ἐκκλησία, in this sense of a Christian organization or organized “church,” began to exist until some time after Pentecost. Moreover, it is reasonable to suppose that Jesus in speaking to Peter would use language that Peter would understand. Now “ἐκκλησία” (church) was a word with which Peter, as a pious Jew versed in the Old Testament, would be familiar; for it is the Septuagint or Greek translation of the Hebrew word “gahal,” meaning “assembly,” or “congregation”; as in the constantly recurring phrases, “Ἐκκλησία (assembly) of Jehovah,” “Ἐκκλησία (congregation) of Israel,” etc. This accounts, as we have seen, for the martyr Stephen’s expression, “The ἐκκλησία (assembly, congregation, church) in the wilderness.” Accordingly, when Jesus pronounced the words, “My ἐκκλησία,” Peter would instantly think of the Mosaic ἐκκλησία, or Jehovah’s congregation of Israel. Our King’s emphasis, however, is not so much on the noun “ἐκκλησία” as on the pronoun “My”; “On this rock I will build, no longer any ἐκκλησία of Moses, but *my* ἐκκλησία, the ἐκκλησία of *MY* congregation and kingdom.” And this ἐκκλησία, or congregation, is not an ἐκκλησία in the sense of a local institution or organized church, but the ἐκκλησία in the sense of a spiritual congregation or

divine kingdom. For there is an *ἐκκλησία* larger and diviner than even the ecclesiastical organizations of the apostolic period; it is the Kingdom of God as administered by his Son in the hearts of men, the spiritual corporation of transfigured characters, the body of Christ, the church of God which he purchased with his own blood.

Gates of Hades. — “And the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” “Hades” is the Septuagint or Greek translation of the Hebrew “Sheol,” meaning “the realm of the dead.” “The gates of Hades” is a metaphor, personifying the powers of destruction. The figure is that of the massive portals of a city, as seat of government, (compare “Sublime Porte”) or fortress, or prison. “Shall not prevail against it” is a continuation of the figure. The gates of destruction shall not be able to swallow up or imprison the Kingdom of God, or Christ’s own *Ἐκκλησία*. The gates of Hades have prevailed against the church of Moses in the wilderness. They have prevailed against the organized churches in Jerusalem, Antioch, Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Philippi, Colosse, Thessalonica, Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamus, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea. But the gates of Hades have not prevailed against the Kingdom of God, the Ecclesia of Peter’s rock-like confession.

Crowns and thrones may perish,
Kingdoms rise and wane,
But the Church of Jesus
Constant will remain;
Gates of hell can never
’Gainst that Church prevail;
We have Christ’s own promise,
And that cannot fail. — SABINE BARING-GOULD.

Ay, our King himself became dead, and behold, he is alive forever more; and he holds in his own girdle the keys of Death and of Hades.

Keys of the Basileia.—“I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.” The King had just spoken of building his ecclesia, or church, on the rock of Peter, and Peter’s confession of Jesus as the Christ and Son of God. But a building implies doors, and doors imply keys. When, therefore, our King promised Peter his keys, the latter must have understood that he was somehow invested with a sort of lord-chamberlain’s or prefect’s office, having authority to open and shut the gates of the King’s spiritual palace. Moreover, Peter, as a pious Jew familiar with the Old Testament, must have recalled the phraseology of the prophet Isaiah when he announced the accession of Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, to the chamberlaincy or stewardship of King Hezekiah’s palace:—

The key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder;
And he shall open, and none shall shut;
And he shall shut, and none shall open. — *Isaiah 22 : 22.*

Our King himself, in afterward dictating through his beloved exile his letter to the angel of the church in Philadelphia, describes himself thus:—

These things says the Holy, the True, he who has the key of David, he who opens, and no one shall shut, and shuts, and no one opens.

— *Revelation 3 : 7.*

But observe: the keys which our King promised to Peter were not the keys of the church, or the ecclesiastical “power of the keys,” such as is claimed by the Pontiffs

of Rome; or by the Protestant hierarchy along the line of "Apostolic Succession"; or even by the Independent churches in the matter of ecclesiastical authority and discipline. No; Peter's keys are not keys of any human ecclesia or organized church; Peter's keys are keys of the divine Ecclesia, or God's spiritual Kingdom:—

Thou art Peter, and on this petra I will build my ecclesia; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it; I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.—*Matthew* 16: 18, 19.

As a matter of fact, Peter, as the rock of the ecclesia and the spokesman of the apostles, did open the doors of the kingdom of heaven to multitudes on the day of Pentecost, and did shut them against Ananias and Sapphira.

Binding and Loosing.—"And whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

"To bind or to loose" was a rabbinic phrase meaning "to forbid or to allow." And as the keys which our King promised to Peter were spiritual keys, opening and shutting the kingdom of heaven, so the binding and loosing he promised was a spiritual binding and loosing, the promise of a spiritual authority in the kingdom of God. Nor was this binding and loosing power conferred on Peter alone. A few days afterward, as the disciples were gathered together at Capernaum, the King gave them directions as to the treatment of offenders, and then added:—

Verily I say to you, whatever ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever ye loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.—*Matthew* 18: 18.

And so, on the evening of the first resurrection Sunday, the King breathed on his disciples, and said : —

Receive the Holy Spirit [the Divine Breath]. Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted to them; whosoever ye retain, they are retained. — *John* 20 : 22-23.

How much do these remarkable words mean? Doubtless all that they seem to mean, namely, this: The kingdom of God, or spiritual church of his Son, as being his Son's, interpreting his word and will and character, speaks with divine authority. Of course, this divine endowment, in the literal, technical, ecclesiastical sense of the word, belonged only to the original apostles. Being the subjects of a special inspiration, they spoke with a special authority, an authority as supreme to-day as when Peter used his power of the keys in opening the kingdom of heaven to Cornelius the centurion, and in closing the kingdom of heaven to Simon the magician. Nevertheless, in the essential, spiritual sense of our King's promise, the endowment at Cæsarea Philippi belongs to the kingdom of God, or the spiritual church of to-day, not less than to Simon Peter. Not that the kingdom of God, or spiritual church of Christ, binds and looses, remits and retains, by any formal vote or edict, as though she were an outward, organized, sitting conclave. This is the ecclesiastical misconception and lie, materializing the conception of God's kingdom, the ideal of Christ's ecclesia; caging her in the crib of form and circumstance; localizing her here and there, now asserting, "Behold, she is in the wilderness," and now exclaiming, "Behold, she is in the secret chambers." No, the kingdom of the living God is not an outward organization. No one has ever seen it any

more than any man has ever seen public opinion. Yet there is a kingdom of God, or spiritual church of his Son, just as truly as there is a public opinion. Nor does this spiritual kingdom of God need, any more than public opinion needs, to hold formal sessions and pass resolutions in order to bind and loose, retain and remit. Not by any local gathering and formal vote, but by an invisible, spiritual influence through all the walks of society; not by decrees of councils local or ecumenical, but by effluence of personal character; not by ecclesiastical organization, but by *esprit de corps*, as being a spiritual organism or Christ's mystical body, does the church of the living God bind and loose, condemn and absolve, retain and remit. Her authority is not the earth-born authority she asserts when she thunders from Rome, or whispers from Lambeth; her authority is the heaven-born authority she wields when, without sceptre or sword or purse, she inspires a nation's heart and conscience and life with the spirit she has caught from her crucified and risen King. The bans she pronounces are not such outward bans as the "Successors of St. Peter" have so often pronounced when they have laid hamlet and city and province and empire under interdict; the bans she pronounces are those inward bans which the spirit of society feels to be divine. The absolution she pronounces is no mere verbal absolution, such as can be bought with penance and money; her absolution is that inner absolution which none but He can pronounce who alone has the authority to forgive sins.

And observe precisely the authority by which the church of the living God binds and looses. It is not by her own authority; it is by the authority of the truth of which

she has been divinely appointed the receptacle, custodian, buttress, disburser. Her office in this respect is not magisterial, it is simply declarative. She does not make the truth; she only believes the truth, speaks the truth, acts the truth. And the truth it is which binds and looses, retains and remits. In other words, all that the kingdom of God or the spiritual church does in this respect is this: she simply declares the conditions of remission and retention. She is neither lawgiver nor judge; she is only a voice in the wilderness, echoing her King's judgments. As the noble Frederick W. Robertson has somewhere pointed out, what the church does in this matter of remitting and retaining is much what the minister does when he performs the marriage rite; it is not the minister who joins together the couple; he only speaks in God's name, declaring that God has joined them together; he does not "marry" them, he simply pronounces them "married." In like manner the function of the church in respect to binding and loosing is simply declarative. It is not the church, but the truth of which the spiritual church, by her speech and life, is the custodian and disburser, which binds and looses, retains and remits. And in as far as she speaks and acts the truth, and nothing but the truth, in so far what she binds on earth is bound in heaven, and what she looses on earth is loosed in heaven. In as far as she is really Christ's body, sharing his life and spirit, in so far does she share Christ's authority.

Jesus said to them, Peace be to you. As the Father has sent me, I also send you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and says to them, Receive the Holy Breath. Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted to them; whosoever ye retain, they are retained. — *John 20: 21-23.*

That is to say, Heaven ratifies what the kingdom of God or the true spiritual church in her instincts and judgments, as cleared and approved by the Holy Spirit, binds and looses, remits and retains; and this for the sufficient reason that she is Christ's own body, and as such the temple of the Holy Spirit.¹

¹ The only other occasion on which our King used this word "*ἐκκλησία*" (church) was when he laid down his principles for the treatment of an erring brother:—

But if thy brother sin, go show him his fault between thee and him alone. If he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he hear not, take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he refuse to hear them, tell it to the ecclesia [church]; and if he neglect to hear the ecclesia [church] also, let him be to thee as the Gentile and the publican. Verily I say to you, whatever ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever ye loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.—*Matthew 18: 15-18.*

In what sense did our King use this word "ecclesia" (church) on this occasion? It could not have been in the later ecclesiastical sense; for churches as ecclesiastical institutions were not organized till some considerable time after Pentecost. It could not have been in any current Jewish sense; for, even assuming that the Jewish synagogue answered to the Mosaic ecclesia (church), the decisions of the then Jewish synagogue were more likely to secure the ratifications of Gehenna than of Paradise. It must have been in the ideal sense of the divine ecclesia or spiritual church; somewhat as the King had just used it in his declaration to Peter at Cæsarea Philippi—the ecclesia (church) of that early pre-apostolic period being the little unorganized company of Christ's own personal followers. The word "ecclesia" itself was doubtless suggested by the Sinaitic "ecclesia in the wilderness," "the assembly of Israel," "the congregation of Jehovah," etc.

CHAPTER IV

THE CHURCH OF GOD'S TEMPLE

HAVING been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom every building, fitly framed together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are being builded together into a habitation of God in the Spirit. — *Ephesians* 2: 20-22.

Perhaps this magnificent architectural figure was suggested to St. Paul by his remembrance of the majestic Temple of Diana which towered in sight of his Ephesian readers. But whether this were so or not, it is certain that "edifying," or society-building, was one of his favorite ideas; for his genius was peculiarly constructive. He was in an eminent degree the Architectural Apostle.¹

And well may the apostle Paul conceive the spiritual ecclesia or church as a sacred edifice. For the ideal mankind — what is it but God's own thronged sanctuary, his own personal shrine? Alas, God's shrine has been profaned; and so his sanctuary is more or less in ruins. And Christianity — what is it, practically speaking, but the moral reconstruction of mankind?

To whom coming, a living stone, ye yourselves also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house. — *1 Peter* 2: 4, 5.

¹ Note some examples; see Acts 20: 32; Rom. 14: 19; 15: 2, 20; 1 Cor. 3: 10, 17; 8: 1; 10: 23; 14: 3-5, 12, 17, 27; 2 Cor. 10: 8; 13: 10; Eph. 4: 12, 16, 29; 1 Thess. 5: 11, etc. And so the paragraph with which we begin this chapter.

And now to the paragraph at the head of our chapter. It is so weighty that we must study it clause by clause.

The Sacred Foundation. — And, first, the sacred Foundation, “Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets.” That is to say, the apostles and prophets themselves are the foundation stones of Christ’s spiritual church. The temple of the living God is being erected on the basis of their testimony, their teaching, their rule, their activities, their character; in a word, their personality. Let us not be afraid of this statement, as though it ascribed too great an honor to mere men. Recall the scene at Cæsarea Philippi, when our King declared to Peter: —

Thou art Petros, and on this petra I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. — *Matthew* 16: 18.

But I hear an objection: “Is not Jesus Christ himself the one sole foundation on which his church can be built?” Most certainly. In the deepest sense of this great word “Rock,” “Other foundation can no one lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” But while this is gloriously true, there is a secondary sense in which it is also true that even fallible men are foundation stones in Immanuel’s church. As a matter of fact, no abstract truth, however divine, can become practically vitalizing and propagative until it is incarnated or concretely impersoned. Truth is alive only as it is lived. Living temples can be built only of living stones on living foundations. And Peter, in virtue of his having been the first conspicuously distinct confessor of the divine Christhood of the Nazarene, is the first of these foundations. This, as we have seen, is the sense in which he was the rock on which the Lord of the Kingdom would build his impregnable church; Peter was

the initial human stone. But Peter was only technically the first; he had his moral equals. Accordingly, the exile of Patmos declares of his Apocalyptic City that its wall had twelve foundations, and on them twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. "Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets"; that is, Christian prophets of apostolic times, trained under apostolic auspices. Nor need we additional foundations of post-apostolic traditions; sufficient for us are the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

The Sacred Corner-stone.—Secondly, the sacred Centre-piece; "Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner-stone." To ancient architects the corner-stone was a massive block of special importance, laid in the foundation at the corner of the building, and binding together the two walls. To this day there lies at the southwest angle of the old temple area on Mount Moriah a vast corner-stone thirty-two feet long, three wide, two thick. Even in our own prosaic age and land the laying of a corner-stone is often the occasion of a great demonstration. Now, when our apostle tells us that Jesus Christ himself is the chief corner-stone of the Christian temple, I think we may infer at least three things. First, Jesus Christ himself is really a part of this great structure of the ideal church,—church and Christ being in the vision of him who sees in secret, as it were, but one personality. Corner-stone, foundation stones, superstructure, are one building; even as root and branches are one vine, head and members one body, husband and wife one flesh or personality. Both the sanctifier and the sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brothers, saying:—

I will declare thy name to my brethren;

In the midst of the congregation [ecclesia] will I sing thy praise.

— *Psalms* 22 : 22 ; *Hebrews* 2 : 12.

Again, Jesus Christ is the principal member of his church — he is the chief corner-stone. Already had the Evangelical Prophet foretold : —

Thus says the Lord Jehovah,

Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone,

A tried stone, a precious corner-stone of sure foundation :

He that believes shall not make haste. — *Isaiah* 28 : 16.

And the apostle Peter, even that rock on which the King declared that he would build his church as its first human foundation stone, has himself written of his Master : —

To whom coming, a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but with God elect, precious, ye yourselves also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Because it is contained in Scripture (*Isaiah* 28 : 16) : —

Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious ;

And he that believes on him shall not be put to shame. — 1 *Peter* 2 : 4-6.

Once more, Jesus Christ himself, in virtue of his being the chief corner-stone, is the common and dominating point for his whole church ; binding foundations and walls, dictating the form and character of the entire structure ; the architectural lines of the edifice as a whole being but the extension of the lines suggested by the corner-stone ; and so, Jesus Christ being the corner-stone, Jesus Christ is also, practically speaking, the keystone. Accordingly, when the temple shall be finished, the Master Builder himself will bring forth the headstone with shoutings of Grace, grace unto it ! Thus significant is our apostle's expression, "Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner-stone."

The Sacred Variety. — Thirdly, the sacred Variety: “In whom all the building, every building, the building in every part.” For the church of the living God is composed of every kind of material — Jew and Gentile, Greek and Scythian, male and female, patriarch and infant, millionaire and journeyman, philosopher and illiterate, minister and layman, Baptist and Quaker; for the materials in Messiah’s temple are as the sands for multitude and as the stars for diversity.

The Sacred Symmetry. — Fourthly, the sacred Symmetry: “Fitly framed together.” What though the materials are so diverse? — now a stone, now a joist, now a brick, now a gem? The diversity of material is matched by the diversity of function. Abraham and Melchizedek, Paul and James, Calvin and Arminius, Newton and Milton, Livingstone and Kothabyoo, reason and imagination, talent and sacrifice, money and prayer, creed and example, — each is taking the place divinely assigned it in the unfolding ideal of Jehovah’s temple. Of this fane not made with hands the poet’s lines are truest: —

Nothing useless is or low,
Each thing in its place is best ;
And what seems but idle show
Strengthens and supports the rest.

— LONGFELLOW’S *Builders*.

All is divinely articulated, because all has been divinely designed from the beginning. And Jesus Christ, in virtue of his being the one corner-stone, is the unifying force: “In whom all the building, every building, fitly framed together.” Or, to cite our apostle’s physiological figure in this same letter: —

From whom all the body, fitly framed together and compacted by means of every joint of the supply, according to the working of each single part in its measure, is effecting the increase of the body to the upbuilding of itself in love. — *Ephesians* 4: 16.

And this leads us to our next point.

The Sacred Growth. — Fifthly, the sacred Growth: "Is growing into a holy temple in the Lord." The church is growing laterally as well as vertically, outwardly as well as inwardly, in practice as well as in doctrine, in numbers as well as in character. Gentile Hiram's are helping Hebrew Solomons in rearing the glorious fabric; one age has laid a floor, another reared a shaft, another sprung an arch, another decorated a window; each age has had its cunning Bezaleels and Aholiabs, whom God has filled with his spirit to devise curious works in gold and silver and brass, in all workmanship of the engraver and embroiderer and weaver, in blue and purple and scarlet and fine linen. Shem long ago brought apostles and prophets for foundation stones; Japheth for centuries has been bringing exegesis and creed-statement for pedestal and column; Ham, it may be, will, ere long, bring a perfected working polity for entablature. What though there seems at present to be some lack of symmetry, here and there shapeless masses of coarse materials, yawning gaps between buttress and buttress? Do not criticise God's own plan too soon; await the unfoldings of time. As the minster of God grows through the centuries, scantling mortising with beam, arch coupling with arch, tier rising on tier, it will be seen gathering more and more of design and symmetry, till in God's own time and hands the copestone shall be brought forth; and then the angelic shoutings will be, Grace, grace unto it!

The Sacred Incorporation. — Sixthly, the sacred Incorporation: "In whom ye also are being builded together." Then Ephesians as well as Israelites are being alike incorporated into this growing cathedral, heathendom being in a very special sense the grand quarry for Messiah's ecclesia. What though the material is coarse and contemned by men? Even so it was with the corner-stone itself. But here, as elsewhere, many first will be last, and last first. There is a stained window in an English cathedral concerning which tradition reports that it was made by an apprentice out of bits of glass rejected by his master; but which proved so superior to every other window in the edifice that the envious artist killed himself from sheer vexation. Many a rough block, spurned by this world's architects, will be seen in the temple of the world to come as a corner-stone hewn after the fashion of a palace. How countless the possible blocks and statues and finials in the great quarry of pagandom! In fact, this incorporation of heathen materials into the growing temple of the Christian church is the main scope of our apostle's paragraph; Paul the Hebrew is addressing the saints in Gentile Ephesus, and would assure them of their equal share with Jews in the blessings of grace:—

Remember, that formerly ye, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands,—that at that time ye were apart from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of the promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. But now, in Christ Jesus, ye, who formerly were far off, have become near in the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who made both one, and broke down the middle wall of the partition which parted us; having put an end in his flesh to the enmity, the law of the commandments

expressed in decrees, that he might make the two one new man in himself, making peace; and might reconcile both in one body to God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby. And he came and brought the good news of peace to you who were far off, and to those who were near. Because through him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. So then ye are no longer strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom every building, fitly framed together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are being builded together into a habitation of God in the Spirit. — *Ephesians* 2: 11-22.

Thus the unity of mankind, lost in the first Adam, is regained in the Second. The instant that the Son of man died, the vail of the temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom, thus signifying that the temple for the Jew henceforth gave way to the house of prayer for all peoples. And herein the saying of the prophet of the Restoration is fulfilled:—

The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, says Jehovah of hosts. — *Haggai* 2: 9.

The Sacred Purpose.—Seventhly, the sacred Purpose: “Into (for) a habitation of God in the Spirit.”

This was the meaning even of the ancient tabernacle itself:—

Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them; there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony. — *Exodus* 25: 8, 22.

Then Jehovah appointed the tabernacle, not so much as the place for the gathering of his people in worship, as for the enshrinement of himself: “Build me a sanctuary, that

I may dwell therein." The phrase, "tabernacle of the congregation" (*ecclesia*), which recurs so often in the Old Testament, was not so much the congress or meeting place of man and man in worship, as it was the congress or meeting place of God himself and man, of Godhead and manhead; the convention of the Infinite and the finite. Accordingly, when the tabernacle was dedicated, the *Shechinah*, or dazzling symbol of Jehovah's presence, which had been resting for many weeks on Sinai, majestically swept downward into the plain, and covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle. Thus augustly did Deity himself take formal possession of his ancient sanctuary. He himself made solemn entry in the cloud-blaze; for the glory-cloud was the symbol and manifestation of his personal presence. This, then, was the meaning of the tabernacle in the wilderness. It was Jehovah's dwelling place; the sacred point where Divinity and humanity met. As such, it stood as the representative of all other tabernacles of material structure, whether Solomon's, or Zerubbabel's, or Herod's, or the fanes of modern Christendom. The structure, whether tabernacle or temple, whether cathedral or conventicle, is the house of God; the place where his honor dwells; his local, material habitation.

But there is a temple nobler than any material tabernacle. It is the church of the living God, the church of the elect and blood-washed and transfigured, that church which throughout all lands and ages and names is the aggregate of Christian characters—this one church of the living God is the temple of God Most High. As Christ is the body or form of God, so Christ's church

is the body or form of Christ himself. And as in Christ dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, so it is with his church, which is his body, the fulness of him who fills all in all, the overflowing receptacle of his own measureless amplitudes. This is that true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. Thus the glory of the tabernacle spiritual is greater than the glory of the tabernacle material. That was of cedar—this is of men. That was a rubric—this is a character. That was the house of prayer for the Jews—this is the house of prayer for all nations. That was inhabited by the Shechinah, dazzling symbol of Jehovah's presence—this is inhabited by the Holy Spirit, who is God himself. What though no glory-cloud canopies Jehovah's church to-day? He whom glory-cloud typified is with us. With wing invisible he broods over us. With breath invisible he breathes on us. With arm invisible he upholds us. With finger invisible he guides us. With presence invisible he inhabits us. In love invisible he baptizes us. In splendor invisible he transfigures us. And in these moments of transfiguration faith catches glimpses of the true and everlasting Shechinah, even of One who clothes himself with light as with a garment, his face shining like the sun, his feet like pillars of fire, his robe the cloud, his crown the rainbow, his jewels the stars.

This is that greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands (that is, not of this creation), whose builder and maker is God.

CHAPTER V

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST'S BODY

As the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ. For in one spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit. For the body also is not one member, but many. If the foot say, Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body; it is not therefore not of the body. And if the ear say, Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body; it is not therefore not of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But as it is, God has set the members each one of them in the body, even as he wished. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now there are many members, but one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more the members of the body which seem to be more feeble, are necessary; and those parts of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness; but our comely parts have no need. But God tempered the body together, giving more abundant honor to that which lacked; that there might be no division in the body, but that the members might have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. — *1 Corinthians 12:12-26.*

Such is the classic analogon of our King's greatest ambassador—an analogon so profound and vital that it will outlive all theories of Christian society, because founded in living physiology; it being, so to speak, a natural parable of the church of Jesus Christ.

Distinguish Analogue and Homologue. — Not of course that this analogon of St. Paul is to be taken literally, as though Christ's church were really a bodily organism having bodily organs. Yet this is the impression which our analogon leaves on many people. For instance—I have a bright clerical friend for whose judgment in general I have profound respect; but he seems to lack what I may venture to call the functional imagination, for in conversing with him about this bodily analogon of St. Paul he objected with the utmost sincerity, saying that he could not imagine how Christ's church could be such an organism: for it would require, he thought, a gigantic body weighing thousands of tons, with arms and legs leagues long, a nose a mile or more in length, and so on. What my friend lacks is the functional imagination—that is, the imagination which enables us to see in the psychical world the functional workings of psychical organs which have no necessary correspondent physical organs in the physical world. For example, it is not absolutely necessary that we should have bodily eyes in order to see, or bodily ears in order to hear; the blind man sees with his fingers when he traces his embossed type, the deaf man hears with his eyes when he watches his friend talking in sign-manual. Or, to illustrate by terms drawn from biology: when two organs resemble each other, not in function, but in structure, as the arm of a man and the pectoral fin of a fish, these organs are said to be homologues. But when two organs resemble each other, not in structure, but in function, as the wing of an eagle and the so-called “wing” of a bat, these organs are said to be analogues. Now the resemblance between the Christian church and the human body is not a homologue

or similarity in anatomical structure : but it is an analogue or similarity in biological function. Accordingly, St. Paul's analogon of the human body is not to be taken literally or sound-wise, but ideally or hint-wise. In other words, his analogon is ideally true. And ideas are often the truest of truths. Let not our familiarity with this analogon of the body deaden our sense of its varied and profound significance. And now we are prepared for some of the rich lessons which St. Paul's great analogon of the human body suggests.

An Outline Statement. — But let me first make a general statement. What our apostle's analogon suggests is in main outline this : The relation between Christ and his church is a functional relation as ideally real, vital, reciprocal, organic, as the relation between the head and its body. This is true in respect to sensation, sympathy, function, coördination, growth, volition, guidance, management — in one word, life. In other words, as the human body is a single organism, consisting of one head and many different organs and functions — all balanced in common counterpoise, and working in mutual interaction ; so Christ and his church is a single moral organism, consisting in like manner of many diversities, balanced in similar counterpoise, and working in similar interaction. Bishop Lightfoot, commenting on this inspired analogon, says : —

The discoveries of modern physiology have invested the apostle's language with far greater distinctness and force than it could have worn to his own contemporaries. Any exposition of the nervous system more especially reads like a commentary on his image of the relations between the body and the head. At every turn we meet with some fresh illustration which kindles it with a flood of light. The volition communicated from the brain to the limbs, the sensations of the extremities telegraphed

back to the brain, the absolute mutual sympathy between the head and the members, the instantaneous paralysis ensuing on the interruptions of continuity, all these add to the completeness and life of the image. — LIGHTFOOT'S *Colossians*, p. 266.

Let me go somewhat into detail, making four points : Singleness of personality, diversity of membership, community of life, effectiveness of issue.

Singleness of Personality. — And, first, as the body, including head and members, forms one organism ; so the church, including Christ and his people, forms, so to speak, one personality. The statement, it will be perceived, is twofold.

First, Christ himself is the head of his church, for the very term "body" itself implies "head." "Grow up in all things into him, who is the head." Christ's church is no headless torso. Being himself the one head, Jesus Christ is, so to speak, the sensorium or nervous centre of his one church — sharing her sensations whether of joy or of grief, coördinating her faculties, directing her movements, unifying her activities, maintaining her life. And as there is but one Christ, so there is but one head. The Lamb of God is no hydra-headed monster.

Secondly, as Christ is the one head, so his church is his one body : "Gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body." Being his own body, Christ's church is as it were a part of his own personality — drawing from him her life, sharing his experience and character, executing his will.

To know, to do, the Head's commands,
For this the body lives and grows ;
All speed of feet, all skill of hands,
Is for him spent, and from him flows. — *Anonymous.*

As Augustine profoundly says, "Totus Christus caput et corpus est" (the whole Christ is head and body). Or, as another Latin proverb states it still more profoundly, "Ubi Christus, ibi Ecclesia" (where Christ is, there the Church is). And as Christ is not a monstrosity in the sense of being many-headed, so his church is not a monstrosity in the sense of being many-bodied. As there is but one Christ, even the head, so there is but one church, even his body. Christ and his church form one personality.

May I add that evidences are not wanting that the theological mind of our generation is taking an onward step in its conception of the church of the living God? While the doctrine of the mutual relation between Christ and each Christian is clearly and stoutly held, the doctrine of the mutual relation between Christ and his people as a whole has never been very precisely stated; and this probably because it has never been very precisely conceived. The idea as a sort of divine germ has always existed in the bosom of the church. Ever and anon we catch glimpses of it as of some vast, sublime, yet dim, aerial conception, floating along the mighty stream of the church's thought, experience, consciousness. But it can hardly be said to have taken definite shape or to have been crystallized into a doctrinal formula. Let us thank God that we are living in an age when his church is beginning to realize that Christianity is truly Christian only as it is entire or corporate instead of being fragmental or egoistic.

Diversity of Membership. — Secondly, diversity of membership, for the very term "body" itself implies "members" which are diverse.

Even as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office, so we, the many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another. — *Romans 12 : 4, 5.*

As the body is not all eye or hand or brain or heart or nerve or bone or cell, so the church is not all conscience or reason or sensibility or will or creed or polity or minister or layman or sex. The church has every variety of gift, grace, function, temperament, experience, method, conception. If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? If all the members were one same member, where were the body? If all mankind were one man, where were woman? If all humanity were Asiatics, where were Americans? If all society were merchants, where were farmers? If the whole church were one Peter, where were Paul? But now our Creator has set all the members — whether men or women, Asiatics or Americans, merchants or farmers, Peters or Pauls — each one of them in the body, even as it pleased him.

Shall eagles not be eagles? wrens be wrens?
If all the world were falcons, what of that?
The wonder of the eagle were the less,
But he not less the eagle. — TENNYSON'S *Golden Year.*

Observe also, that, as uniformity is a mark of the lowest stage of existence, so variety is a mark of the highest. The nobler the life, the more complex and differenced. For example, how beautifully life complicates and diversifies as, starting from the lowest forms of animal existence, we trace its ever multiplying differentiations in the amoeba, the polyp, the clam, the spider, the salmon, the lizard, the eagle, the lion, and finally man himself! Indeed,

one of the happiest definitions of life is this by Professor Guyot — "Life is the mutual exchanging of relations." And the higher the life, the intenser the exchanging. Contrast, for instance, the child of barbarism and the child of civilization. How simple the wants of the savage; how few and rude his tools — you might almost gather them into your study. But how many and diversified the wants of the civilized man; how numberless and complicated his tools — the vast grounds of World's Expositions could hardly contain them. In brief, differentiation is the very condition of life. Dead things are uniform, live things are multiform. Every growing thing grows by multiplication of organs and functions and their consignment to specific ends. Development is by specialization. How wonderfully this comes out in the growth of the germinating vesicle of an egg or cell! And the higher the grade of being, the more individualized as well as the more complicated become its organs and functions. Now the Christian church, just because it is Christ's body, is a sublime instance of differentiation and specialization. In fact, it is the superbest finite instance of a myriad-fold diversity, and this alike in respect of organs, functions, gifts, opinions, methods, achievements.

God set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governings, various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Have all gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? — *1 Corinthians* 12: 27-30.

Community of Life. — Thirdly, community of life, for the very term "members" itself implies a common "body,"

and so a common life. If all the members were one member, where were the body? But now they are many members, yet but one body. And it is the diversity of the members which is essential to the unity of the body. Unity, I say, not unit. For consider for a moment the difference between them. A unit is a single one, surveyed as it were externally, in isolation from other single ones. A unity is also a single one; but it is surveyed as it were internally, in its parts, each and every part being in mutual adjustment to one common end. A unit is a single isolated one; a unity is a union of several diverse ones systematized into a common state of oneness. A unit is one in the sense of numerical singleness; a unity is one in the sense of harmonious pluralness. A unit is *unum*; a unity is *e pluribus unum*. For example, a molecule of water, considered in its wholeness and in distinction from other molecules of water, is a unit; but the same molecule of water, considered in its constituents as consisting of two atoms of hydrogen and one atom of oxygen, is a unity.

But unity implies something more than harmonious variety of parts; it also implies the subordination of these various parts to one common end. In fact it is this coöperation of diverse parts to one common end which makes these diverse parts as a whole a unity. To illustrate from our great biologic analogon: A finger, surveyed as a finger in distinction from other fingers, is a unit; but the hand, surveyed as a system of fingers, is a unity. And this convergent diversity is, I repeat, indispensable to the unity. If the whole body were an eye, where were the ear? If all the members were one similar member—all

eyes or ears or noses — where were the body? But now they are all diverse members unified into one common body. And this diverse co-membership is mutually co-necessary; the eye must not say to the hand, I have no need of thee; or again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. And this necessity of diversity is especially true of the obscurer members of the body; those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary. If there were no cells, there could be no blood; and if there were no blood, there could be no body either corporal or personal. Thus the unity of the body consists in the unified diversity of its parts, organs, functions.

Even so is all this true of that ideal but august sample of a body — the spiritual body of Jesus Christ. For while it is true that each Christian has his own individual mission or function, it is also true that all Christians constitute one common organism, namely, the one sublime corpus or body of Christ's church; whereof each Christian is, so to speak, a component member and specific organ, having his own definite function to discharge in the one organism of Christ's spiritual body or kingdom. And it is this mutual co-working of diverse personal Christian relations and functions which constitutes the church of God a unity.

Effectiveness of Issue. — Once more, effectiveness of issue. For observe how all this unity of the bodily organism as consisting of singleness of headship, diversity of membership, and community of life, issues in undivided, concentrated effectiveness. How is it that a steam-engine, although small compared with the mass it moves, is able to drive a mighty craft with all her ponderous cargo, in teeth of billow and tempest, from continent to continent? It is

not merely because it is made of iron and worked by the power of steam; it is also because valves and pistons, cranks and wheels, shaft and propeller, under management of the skilful engineer, all work in reciprocal adjustment and harmonious coöperation to one common end, namely, sending the mighty steamer across the Atlantic. But let some slight derangement of the machinery occur, — some valve refuse to work, some cog interfere, some pin give way, — and the engine which was stouter than leviathan becomes as helpless as an extinct ichthyosaurus. Or, to come nearer our fundamental analogon: How is it that the human body can achieve exploits so numerous, so various, so stupendous? It is not because it is so vast or so stout in itself; but it is because it is a magnificent sample of coöperative unity — heart coöperating with lungs, nerve answering to mind, muscle combining with will, joint articulating with bone, thumb concurring with fingers; in short, body coöperating with head. But let some accident or disease destroy the coöperative unity of the body, and the man who could laughingly shoulder the gates of Gaza cannot even shake himself from the knees of Delilah.

The Body the Truest Analogon of Ecclesia. — Thus the human body is a profound and telling symbol, or rather suggestive functional analogue, of that majestic ideal organism which we call the Church of the living God. We shall never rise to a higher or truer conception of the Christian Ecclesia than under this biologic analogue of the bodily organism. We outlive human creeds; we shall never outlive divine biology.

CHAPTER VI

THE CHURCH OF THE KING'S BRIDE

The Earthly Marriage a Type of the Heavenly.—The conception of Jehovah and his People under figure of Bridegroom and Bride underlies the whole Bible from Genesis to Revelation. It is foreshadowed in the Parable of Eden. It is the theme of the Forty-fifth Psalm, wherein the sacred bard sets forth the personal beauty, the warlike prowess, the divine majesty, the just government, of a royal Bridegroom, and the gorgeous attire and retinue of a royal Bride. It furnishes the Prophets with their most frequent and powerful imagery in their denunciation of Israel's coquetry with idols, setting forth her sins in this respect under the various terms of marital infidelity.¹ It is expressly and emphatically asserted in the New Testament. Let me cite a single example:—

Husbands, love your wives, as also Christ loved the church, and delivered himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the bathing of water in the word, that he might himself present to himself the church, glorious, not having a spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it may be holy and without blemish. So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies. He that loves his own wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh; but nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ the church; because we are members of his body. For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and the two shall be one flesh.

¹ See Jeremiah : 1-25; Ezekiel 16 : 1-63; 23 : 1-49; Hosea 1 : 1-11; 2 : 1-23; etc.

This mystery is great; but I am speaking of Christ and of the church. — *Ephesians* 5:25-32. See also *Matthew* 9:15; 22:1-10; 25:1-13; *John* 3:29; 2 *Corinthians* 11:2, 3; *Revelation* 19:6-9; 21:2-9; 22:17; etc.

Not that the church has yet attained to all this. She is still but a child, talking as a child, thinking as a child, reasoning as a child. But the day is approaching when that which is perfect will come, and that which is in part will be done away. Then she will put away childish things. Then will she attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to the proportions of a full-grown personality, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, standing before him in very truth as his helpmeet and complemental, his peer in the second Eden as Eve was Adam's peer in the first. Then will he indeed joyously present her to himself as his own Lady-elect, even the church glorious and holy, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

Thus was the marriage in the Eden that has been the type and prophecy of the marriage in the Eden that is to be. That was the symbol, this is the substance; that was the passing shadow, this is the abiding reality; that was the parable, this is the interpretation. Thus the last Adam is older than the first; the church of the living God is older than the mother of all living. And so St. Paul, in declaring to us his great mystery concerning Christ and his church, to wit, that we are members of his body, and so virtually repeating Adam's own words in Eden, did, as was the wont of his Master, utter things hidden from the foundation of the world.

CHAPTER VII

THE CHURCH OF NEW JERUSALEM

God made the country, and man made the town.

—COWPER'S *Task*, I.

So sang William Cowper. But Abraham Cowley had anticipated him by a hundred years :—

God the first garden made, and the first city Cain.

—COWLEY'S *Garden*, Essay V.

And Cowley had been anticipated by Marcus Terentius Varro, who, born a century before Christ, had written :—

Divine Nature gave the fields, human art built the cities.

—VARRO, *De Re Rustica*, III, 1.

And surely nothing is more charming than rural life—a life of fresh air, tinted sunsets, green fields, picturesque cottages, rippling rivers, swaying forests, stately mountains. Happy the children and invalids and toilers for whom our cities provide fresh-air excursions!

Nevertheless, Man is greater than nature. Eden's charter gave him dominion over the trees of the soil, the fish of the sea, the fowl of the air, and everything that moves upon the earth. Hence the city, as being the special abode of men, is greater than the country. Cities are the nation's bourses, clearing-houses, depots, marts. Cities are the nation's foci—alike convergent and effluent. Cities are the nation's centres—alike industrial,

political, social, ganglionic, nervous, sensory. Cities are the nation's laboratories, in which its own capacities are developed; the crucibles, in which its own character is tested. Hence the apostle Paul selected cities rather than hamlets as his strategic points; for instance, he planted his missions in Antioch, Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth, Ephesus, Rome. Accordingly, Christianity conquered municipalities before it conquered villages, as is shown in the very word "pagan" (which originally meant "countryman"); in the very word "heathen" (which originally meant "peasant"). In brief, the city is the highest type of civilization, the very culmination of human society. In fact, Heaven itself is represented as a city rather than a country. Heaven is a transfigured Jerusalem, Babylon, Nineveh, Athens, Rome, London, Paris, New York, Chicago.

Old Jerusalem. — To the ancient Jew Jerusalem was earth's ideal city. Babylon was the city of force; Athens was the city of genius; Rome was the city of law. But Jerusalem was the city of religion; it was the holy city, the city of God, the city of the great King, the city of solemnities. Here the great David had reigned. Here Solomon the wise had built the temple so exceeding magnificent. Here the glorious festivals had been kept. Here the tribes had gone up from all parts of the land to worship. Here had been the rendezvous of the returning exiles. Here, as the devout had hoped, would be the final, universal, everlasting Metropolis of the Kingdom of God. And Jerusalem was, if possible, even more dear to the Christian Jew. Here the Lord of the Kingdom, as his mother's first-born, had been duly presented to Jehovah

according to the ritual of Moses. Here he had wrought many a sign and wonder. Here he had made his triumphal entry. Here he had spoken his farewell sayings, and instituted his memorial feast. Here he had been tried, condemned, crucified, buried. Here he had presented himself alive, after he had suffered, by many proofs, appearing ever and anon to his disciples during forty days, and speaking the things concerning the Kingdom of God. Here he had announced that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. Here, being assembled together with them, he had commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to remain until they should be clothed with power from on high by receiving the promised baptism of the Spirit. Here he had led them out until they were over against Bethany, and lifting up his hands had blessed them. Here, while he was blessing them, he had been parted from them, and borne up into heaven. Here they had returned from Olivet with great joy, worshipping in the temple, continually blessing God. Here they had gone up into the upper room,—perhaps the same large upper guest-chamber where they had eaten with their King the last supper of the old covenant and the first supper of the new. Here the infant “church,” numbering some hundred and twenty, had remained ten days, all continuing with one accord in prayer. Here, as they were worshipping, had suddenly come a sound out of heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and filled all the house where they were sitting. Here Peter had delivered his pentecostal sermon. Here three thousand had welcomed his word, and been baptized. Here the converts had constantly attended on the teaching of the apostles,

the distribution, the breaking of bread, the prayers. Here had been the Christian community of goods. Here the first seven almoners had been elected. Here Stephen had suffered martyrdom. Here Saul the persecutor had been admitted into the fellowship of the mother church. Here had been held the first Ecclesiastical Conference of the Christian church. Here James the Lord's brother had served as bishop or pastor. Here, in brief, had been the nucleus of Christendom. Thus in old Jerusalem, even though she was in bondage with her children, was the beginning of the true City of God, even the new Jerusalem that is above and free; and she is the mother of us all. What an evolution from the unorganized company of primitive Christians in old Jerusalem to the general assembly and church of the first-born, even new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband!

New Jerusalem. — No wonder, then, that when the exile of Patmos was vouchsafed in prophetic trance a vision of the triumphant kingdom or perfected church, it appeared to him as a transfigured Jerusalem. Had he been a Babylonian, or an Athenian, or a Roman, the apocalyptic city might have seemed to him a transfigured Babylon, or an idealized Athens, or a celestialized Rome. But he was a Hebrew; and so his Hebrew imagination, under divine inspiration, beheld a glorified Hebrew Jerusalem. Not that his description is to be studied as though it were a city plan, or a guide-book of Baedeker. It is a poet's "vision" or trance, not an engineer's survey. In fact, a literal interpretation of this vision of St. John is both rhetorically incongruous and physically impossible. But when it is taken

symbolically, it becomes divinely harmonious and true. The imagery is of course Oriental, and may not please our Occidental taste. The eye that is charmed by the noble severity of Durham cathedral, or the exquisite beauty of Tintern abbey, or the majestic dignity of Cologne minster, might be repelled by the barbaric opulence of Solomon's temple, or the grotesque incongruities of Ezekiel's mystic fane, or the impossible splendors of John's holy City. Nevertheless, spiritually surveyed, it was a divinely inspired vision, as majestic as exquisite.

He carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God; her luminary like a most precious stone, as it were a jasper stone, clear as crystal; having a wall great and high; having twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel; on the east were three gates, and on the north three gates, and on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he who spoke with me had a golden reed for a measure to measure the city, and its gates, and its walls. And the city lies four-square, and its length is as great as the breadth. And he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs; the length, and the breadth, and the height of it are equal. And he measured its wall a hundred and forty-four cubits, the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. And the material of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like pure glass. The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every precious stone. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprasus; the eleventh, hyacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each several gate was of one pearl; and the street of the city was pure gold, as transparent glass. And a temple I saw not in it; for the Lord, God, the Almighty, is its temple, and the Lamb. And the city has no need of the sun, nor of the moon, to shine on it; for the

glory of God lightened it, and its lamp is the Lamb. And the nations will walk by its light; and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it. And its gates will not be shut by day; for there will be no night there; and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. And there shall not enter into it any thing unclean, or he that works abomination and falsehood; but only they who are written in the Lamb's book of life. — *Revelation 21: 10-27.*

Such is St. John's vision of the ideal City, or the perfected Christian Church. His New Jerusalem realizes earth's loftiest ideals; for example, the "Atlantis" of Plato; the "Arcadia" of Sir Philip Sidney; the "Utopia" of Sir Thomas More; the "Oceana" of James Harrington; the dreams of Hesiod, Virgil, Condorcet, Coleridge, Comte, and the like. Here is the true "Civitas Dei" of Augustine. Here is the grand issue of human time. Prophet and Sibyl, Providence and History, the Kingdom of God and the Church of Christ, are at last in port.

APPENDIX

LIST OF SCRIPTURES IN WHICH THE WORD "EC- CLESIA" (AS A RELIGIOUS TERM) OCCURS

THE SCRIPTURE	THE SCOPE
1. On this rock I will build my church (Mat. 16:18)	DIVINE.
2. If he refuse to hear, tell it to the church (Mat. 18:17)	HUMAN.
3. If he neglect to hear the church (Mat. 18:17) .	HUMAN.
4. Great fear came on the whole church (Acts 5:11)	HUMAN.
5. The church in the wilderness (Acts 7:38) . . .	HUMAN.
6. A great persecution against the church (Acts 8:1)	HUMAN.
7. Saul laid waste the church (Acts 8:3)	HUMAN.
8. The church throughout all Judæa, Galilee, Samaria (Acts 9:31)	HUMAN.
9. Report came to the ears of the church (Acts 11:22)	HUMAN.
10. Came together in the church (Acts 11:26) . .	HUMAN.
11. Put forth his hands to harm some of the church (Acts 12:1)	HUMAN.
12. Prayer was earnestly made by the church (Acts 12:5)	HUMAN.
13. In the church that was there (Acts 13:1) . . .	HUMAN.
14. Appointed elders for them in every church (Acts 14:23)	HUMAN.
15. When they had assembled the church (Acts 14:27)	HUMAN.
16. Having been sent forward by the church (Acts 15:3)	HUMAN.
17. Having been welcomed by the church (Acts 15:4)	HUMAN.

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| 18. The apostles, the elders, with the whole church
(Acts 15:22) | HUMAN. |
| 19. Confirming the churches (Acts 15:41) | HUMAN. |
| 20. The churches were strengthened in the faith
(Acts 16:5) | HUMAN. |
| 21. Went up and saluted the church (Acts 18:22) | HUMAN. |
| 22. Called the elders of the church (Acts 20:17) | HUMAN. |
| 23. Shepherd the church of God (Acts 20:28) | DIVINE. |
| 24. The church which is at Cenchræa (Rom. 16:1) | HUMAN. |
| 25. All the churches of the Gentiles (Rom. 16:4) | HUMAN. |
| 26. The church that is in their house (Rom. 16:5) | HUMAN. |
| 27. All the churches of Christ salute you (Rom.
16:16) | HUMAN. |
| 28. Gaius my host, and of the whole church, salutes
you (Rom. 16:23) | HUMAN. |
| 29. The church of God which is in Corinth (1 Cor.
1:2) | HUMAN. |
| 30. As I teach everywhere in every church (1 Cor.
4:17) | HUMAN. |
| 31. Who are of no esteem in the church (1 Cor. 6:4) | HUMAN. |
| 32. So I ordain in all the churches (1 Cor. 7:17) | HUMAN. |
| 33. Either to Jews or Greeks, or to the church of God
(1 Cor. 10:32) | HUMAN. |
| 34. No such custom, nor the churches of God (1 Cor.
11:16) | HUMAN. |
| 35. When ye come together in church (1 Cor. 11:18) | HUMAN. |
| 36. Despise ye the church of God (1 Cor. 11:22) | HUMAN. |
| 37. God set some in the church (1 Cor. 12:28) | HUMAN. |
| 38. He that prophesies builds up the church (1 Cor.
14:4) | HUMAN. |
| 39. That the church may receive upbuilding (1 Cor.
14:5) | HUMAN. |
| 40. To the upbuilding of the church (1 Cor. 14:12) | HUMAN. |
| 41. In church I had rather speak five words (1 Cor.
14:19) | HUMAN. |
| 42. If the whole church is assembled together (1 Cor.
14:23) | HUMAN. |
| 43. Let him keep silence in church (1 Cor. 14:28) | HUMAN. |

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44. In all the churches of the saints (1 Cor. 14:33) . HUMAN.
45. Let your women keep silence in the churches
(1 Cor. 14:34) HUMAN.
46. Shameful for a woman to speak in church (1 Cor.
14:35) HUMAN.
47. Persecuted the church of God (1 Cor. 15:9) . HUMAN.
48. As I directed the churches of Galatia (1 Cor.
16:1) HUMAN.
49. The churches of Asia salute you (1 Cor. 16:19) . HUMAN.
50. The church that is in their house (1 Cor. 16:19). HUMAN.
51. The church of God which is in Corinth (2 Cor.
1:1) HUMAN.
52. The churches of Macedonia (2 Cor. 8:1) . . . HUMAN.
53. Throughout all the churches (2 Cor. 8:18) . . HUMAN.
54. Appointed by the churches (2 Cor. 8:19) . . . HUMAN.
55. Messengers of the churches (2 Cor. 8:23) . . . HUMAN.
56. Show toward them before the churches (2 Cor.
8:24) HUMAN.
57. Robbed other churches (2 Cor. 11:8) HUMAN.
58. Anxiety for all the churches (2 Cor. 11:28) . . HUMAN.
59. Inferior to the rest of the churches (2 Cor. 12:13) HUMAN.
60. To the churches of Galatia (Gal. 1:2) HUMAN.
61. Persecuted the church of God (Gal. 1:13) . . HUMAN.
62. The churches of Judæa (Gal. 1:22) HUMAN.
63. Head over all things to the church (Eph. 1:22). DIVINE.
64. Made known through the church (Eph. 3:10) . DIVINE.
65. To him be the glory in the church (Eph. 3:21) . DIVINE.
66. Christ is head of the church (Eph. 5:23) . . . DIVINE.
67. The church is subjected to Christ (Eph. 5:24) . DIVINE.
68. Christ loved the church (Eph. 5:25) DIVINE.
69. Present to himself the church (Eph. 5:27) . . DIVINE.
70. Even as Christ the church (Eph. 5:29) . . . DIVINE.
71. Speaking of Christ and of the church (Eph. 5:32). DIVINE.
72. Persecuting the church (Phil. 3:6) HUMAN.
73. No church communicated with me (Phil. 4:15) . HUMAN.
74. The head of the body, the church (Col. 1:18) . DIVINE.
75. Sake of his body, which is the church (Col. 1:24). DIVINE.
76. The church in their house (Col. 4:15) HUMAN.

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| 77. | The church of the Laodiceans (Col. 4 : 16) . . | HUMAN. |
| 78. | The church of the Thessalonians (1 Thes. 1 : 1) . | HUMAN. |
| 79. | The churches of God which are in Judæa
(1 Thes. 2 : 14) | HUMAN. |
| 80. | The church of the Thessalonians (2 Thes. 1 : 1) . | HUMAN. |
| 81. | Glory in you in the churches of God (2 Thes.
1 : 4) | HUMAN. |
| 82. | How shall he take care of the church of God
(1 Tim. 3 : 5) | HUMAN. |
| 83. | The church of the living God (1 Tim. 3 : 15) . | |
| 84. | Let not the church be burdened (1 Tim. 5 : 16) . | HUMAN. |
| 85. | The church in thy house (Phil. 2) | HUMAN. |
| 86. | In the midst of the church I will sing praise
(Heb. 2 : 12) | HUMAN. |
| 87. | Church of the first-born (Heb. 12 : 23) | DIVINE. |
| 88. | Let him call for the elders of the church
(Jas. 5 : 14) | HUMAN. |
| 89. | Testified to thy love before the church
(3 Jno. 6) | HUMAN. |
| 90. | I wrote somewhat to the church (3 Jno. 9) . . | HUMAN. |
| 91. | Casts them out of the church (3 Jno. 10) . . . | HUMAN. |
| 92. | John to the seven churches (Rev. 1 : 4) . . . | HUMAN. |
| 93. | Send to the seven churches (Rev. 1 : 11) . . . | HUMAN. |
| 94. | The seven stars are angels of the seven churches
(Rev. 1 : 20) | HUMAN. |
| 95. | The seven lamp-stands are the seven churches
(Rev. 1 : 20) | HUMAN. |
| 96. | The church in Ephesus (Rev. 2 : 1) | HUMAN. |
| 97. | Hear what the Spirit says to the churches
(Rev. 2 : 7) | HUMAN. |
| 98. | The church in Smyrna (Rev. 2 : 8) | HUMAN. |
| 99. | Hear what the Spirit says to the churches
(Rev. 2 : 11) | HUMAN. |
| 100. | The church in Pergamus (Rev. 2 : 12) | HUMAN. |
| 101. | Hear what the Spirit says to the churches
(Rev. 2 : 17) | HUMAN. |
| 102. | The church in Thyatira (Rev. 2 : 18) | HUMAN. |
| 103. | All the churches shall know (Rev. 2 : 23) . . . | HUMAN. |

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104. Hear what the Spirit says to the churches
 (Rev. 2:29) HUMAN.
105. The church in Sardis (Rev. 3:1) HUMAN.
106. Hear what the Spirit says to the churches
 (Rev. 3:6) HUMAN.
107. The church in Philadelphia (Rev. 3:7) HUMAN.
108. Hear what the Spirit says to the churches
 (Rev. 3:13) HUMAN.
109. The church in Laodicea (Rev. 3:14) HUMAN.
110. Hear what the Spirit says to the churches
 (Rev. 3:22) HUMAN.
111. Testify to you these things in the churches
 (Rev. 22:16) HUMAN.

Reviewing this list of passages as a whole, we cannot fail to be struck with certain peculiarities. For example:—

The word "church," as a religious term, occurs one hundred and eleven times in the New Testament: three times in the Gospels, nineteen times in the Acts, sixty-two times in the Letters of Paul, twice in the Letter to the Hebrews, once in the Letter of James, three times in the Letters of John, twenty times in the Revelation. It does not occur in the Letters of Peter or in the Letter of Jude. It is mentioned ninety-seven times as an ecclesiastical organization or human institution, and fourteen times as a spiritual organization or divine company.

These facts are certainly provocative of serious reflection.

INDEX OF TOPICS

- "A church" and "the church," distinguish between, 164-167.
 Adjustments, problem of ecclesiastical, 55-58.
 Advent, primitive expectation of second, 4, 5.
 Agassiz, his story of the geologist Werner, 99, 100.
 Analogue and homologue, distinguish between, 191, 192.
 Antioch, birthplace of foreign missions, 20-26.
 birthplace of name "Christians," 18, 19.
 "Apostolical Succession," the true, 134.
 Assumptions, beware of, 3, 82-85.
 Auguries of unification, 156, 157.
 Baptism, modern problem of, 66-76.
 no problem to primitive church, 66.
 of the Ethiopian Eunuch, 15.
 symbolism of, 71-75.
 Baptists, proposed irenicon for, 91.
 Beware of assumptions, 1, 82.
 "dixits," 82-85.
 "ordinances," 83, 84.
 slavery to ritual, 117, 118, 126.
 "Binding and loosing," meaning of, 175-179.
 "Body of Christ," meaning of, 190-199.
 Body-side of Christianity, 50, 54, 135, 140.
 Bride of Christ, 200, 201.
 Canterbury, missionary college at, 140.
 Catholicity of Jesus, 150.
 Paul, 24-26.
 Chanting, superiority of, 122-124.
 Charisms, the primitive, 37, 38.
 Christ, the church his body, 190-199.
 bride, 200, 201.
 Christian character, the qualification for Lord's Supper, 80, 81.
 "Christians," origin of name of, 18, 19.
 Church, as a divine ideal, 161-207.
 as a modern problem, 45-157.
 as a primitive society, 3-43.
 beneficence of, 46.
 credentials of, 53, 54.
 disunity of, 142.
 failure of, 47.
 mission of, 45-54.
 picture of maturing, 158-160.
 problems of, 55-157.
 unification of, 141-157.
 various meanings of the word "church," 161-163.
 word "church" mentioned only 19 times in Acts, 36.
 Churches, necessity of, 42, 43.
 Creeds, problem of, 94-106.
 Deaconesses, need of, 130-134.
 Devotions, the chief part of worship, 114-117.
 Distinguish between "a church" and "the church," 164-167.
 analogue and homologue, 191, 192.
 organism and organization, 164-169.
 unit and unity, 197, 198.
 "Ecclesia," fine instance of verbal transfiguration, 161-163.
 the King's, 170-179.
 Ethiopian Eunuch, baptism of, 15.
 Evils of sectarianism, 142, 143.
 Evolution of the primitive church, 4-43.

- "Faith delivered once for all to the saints," 155.
 Feet-washing, custom of, 67-70.
 First Christian Convention, 27-35.
 Foreign missions, birth of, 20-26.
 Forms in worship, need of, 111-113.
- "Gates of Hades," meaning of, 173.
 "God is spirit," 109, 110.
- "Hades, gates of," 173.
 Heredity, beneficence of, 61-65.
 Hezekiah's catholic prayer, 89, 90.
 Homologue and analogue, distinguish between, 191, 192.
- Ideal church, a unity, 141.
 Immersion, the primitive baptism, 66, 71-75.
 Imperfections of primitive church, 40-42.
 Infant conversion, profoundly philosophical, 60, 61.
 Inspiration not omniscience, 40.
 Irenicon, proposed Baptist, 91-93.
 Non-Baptist, 75-76.
- Jerusalem, the church in, 13, 14.
 Jesus at Jacob's well, 109, 110.
 his reply to John's embassy, 49-54.
 Jews, narrowness of the ancient, 21-23.
 John's intense sectarianism, 150.
 Justification, James's doctrine of, 53, 54.
- "Keys of the Kingdom," meaning of phrase, 174, 175.
 Kingdom, church of the, 170-179.
- Lay-missionaries, problem of, 135-140.
 Levitical worship, a divinely prescribed liturgy, 109.
 Liturgy, problem of, 107-124.
 "Lord's Prayer," seventeenth of John's Gospel, the real, 119.
 Lord's Supper, problem of, 77-97.
 Love, the supreme commandment, 91-93.
- Matthias, appointment of, 7.
- Mission of the church, 45-54.
 of the principal sects, 147-149.
 Missionary college at Canterbury, 140.
 Missions, birth of foreign, 20-26.
 Music, the natural outlet of devotion, 120, 121.
- New Jerusalem, church of, 202-207.
 "New things and old," 102, 103.
- Officers of the primitive church, 38, 39.
 "Ordinances," beware of, 83, 84.
 Organism and organization, distinguish between, 164-169.
- Parallelism, Hebrew, 121, 122.
 Paul, catholicity of, 24-26.
 Pentecostal community of goods, 8, 9.
 Peter, his interview with Cornelius, 17.
 his relapse at Antioch, 40.
 Prayer, the Pattern, 119.
 Primitive church, 3-43.
 a child of circumstances, 5.
 assumptions concerning, 3, 4.
 charisms of, 37, 38.
 community of goods, 8, 9.
 convention of, 27-35.
 evolution of, 4-43.
 first mention of "church" in Acts 4, 9.
 general survey of, 36-39.
 imperfections of, 40-42.
 knowledge of largely inferential, 39, 40.
 not our ecclesiastical model, 40-42.
 officers of, 38, 39.
 theology of, 39.
- Problems of modern church, 45-157.
 adjustments, 55-58.
 baptism, 66-76.
 creeds, 94-106.
 lay-missionaries, 135-140.
 liturgy, 107-128.
 Lord's Supper, 59-67.
 membership, 129-134.
 polity, 141-257.
 unification, 141-157.
- Qualification for Lord's Supper, 80, 81.

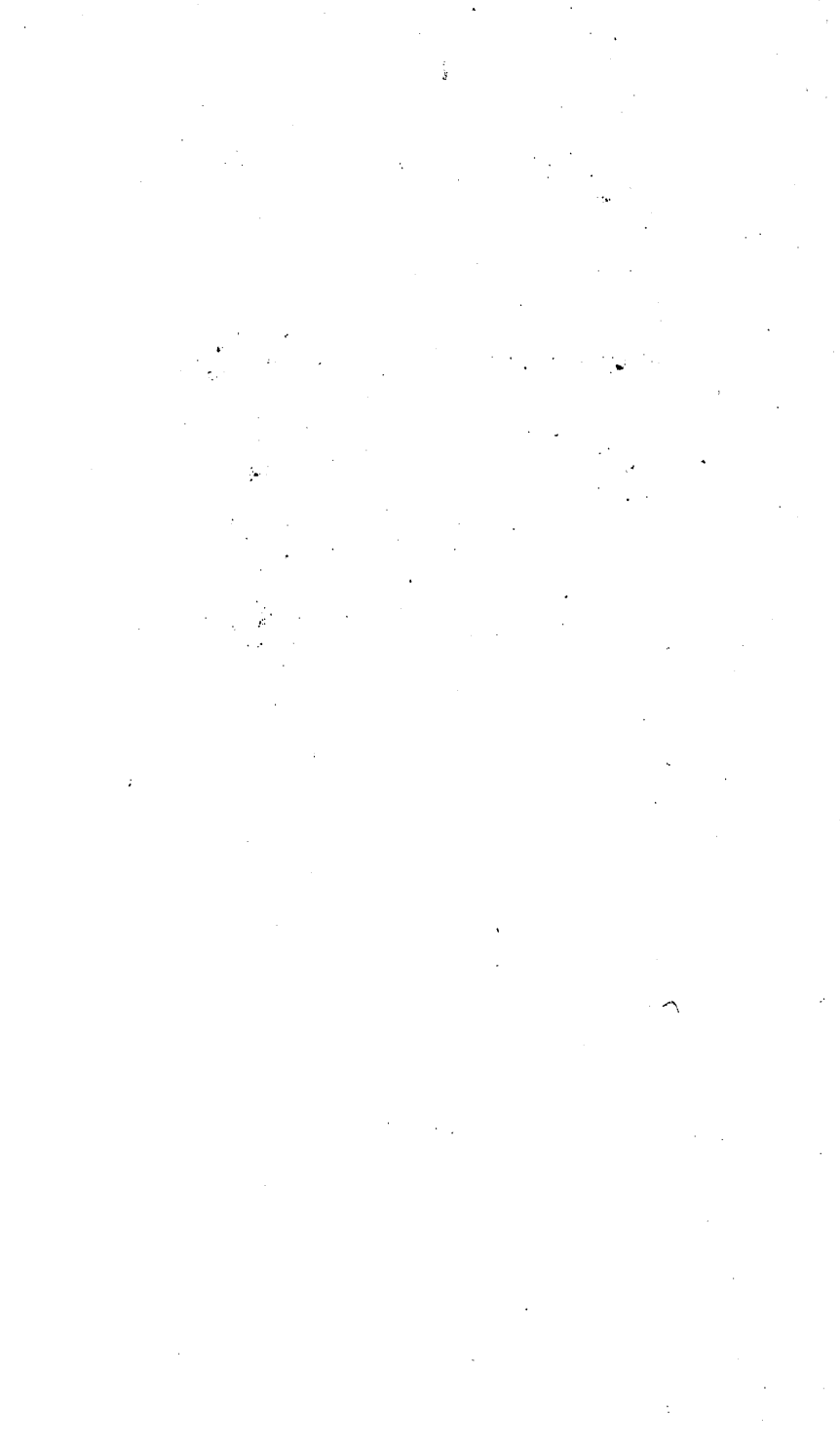
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|--|---|
| <p>Rock, church of the, 170-179.</p> <p>Sectarianism, born of finiteness, 153.
 evils of, 142, 143.
 of John the beloved, 150.</p> <p>Sects, mission of the principal, 147-149.</p> <p>"Seven," appointment of the, 10, 11.</p> <p>"Signs of the times," 55-58.</p> <p>Stephen, story of, 12, 13.</p> <p>Symbolism of baptism, 71-76.
 Lord's Supper, 79-81.</p> <p>Tabernacle, purpose of ancient, 108, 109.</p> <p>Temple of God's church, 180-189.</p> <p>Theology of primitive church, 39.</p> | <p>Unification of church, problem of,
 141-157.</p> <p>Unit and unity, distinguish between,
 197.</p> <p>Unity of the ideal church, 141.</p> <p>Value of Christian sects, 147, 148.</p> <p>Various uses of the word "church,"
 161-163.</p> <p>Werner, his geological prejudices, 99,
 100.</p> <p>"Wilderness, church in," 13.</p> <p>Wine-skins, parable of, 96-101.</p> <p>Worship, problem of, 107-128.</p> |
|--|---|

INDEX OF SCRIPTURES CITED

Exodus :		John :		1 Corinthians :	
19: 3-6	168	3: 23	73	12: 13	93
20: 6	62	4: 19-24	109	12: 27-30	37
25: 8, 22	108	4: 35	65	14: 7-9	122
2 Chronicles :		13: 3-17	67	14: 33, 40	115
30: 1-20	90	20: 22, 23	176	15: 46	37
Psalms :		Acts :		Galatians :	
22: 22	183	1: 12-14	6	2: 1-10.	33
95: 1-7	123	1: 15-26	7	3: 27	72, 73
Ecclesiastes :		2: 41	7	Ephesians :	
5: 1, 2	115	2: 42-47	8	2: 11-22	180, 187
Isaiah :		2: 47	4, 9	2: 20-22	180
22: 22	174	4: 32-37	4, 9	4: 4-6	141
28: 16	183	5: 11	8, 9	4: 11-16	158
Haggai :		5: 34-39	106	5: 19	120
2: 9	187	6: 1-6	4, 9	5: 25-32	200
Matthew :		6: 2-4	10	Philippians :	
3: 6	72	6: 7	12	1: 1	131
3: 16	73	7: 38	13	Colossians :	
6: 7, 8	117	8: 1	13	2: 8, 9	105
6: 9-13	119	8: 1-4	14	2: 12	71, 73
9: 17	96	8: 26-40	15	1 Thessalonians :	
11: 2-6	49, 137	8: 36-38	73	5: 21, 22	104
12: 46-50	93	9: 31	16	15: 23	136
13: 52	102	10: 34, 35	89, 95	1 Timothy :	
16: 2, 3	55	11: 19-20	18	3: 8-11	131
16: 13-19	170	11: 27-30	19	5: 9, 10	68
18: 15-18	179	13: 1-3	20	2 Timothy :	
26: 27-29	78	15: 1-29	29	1: 5	61
Mark :		22: 16	72, 73	Hebrews :	
9: 38-42	150	Romans :		2: 12	183
10: 13-16	60	6: 3-4	71, 73	James :	
10: 38	73	6: 5	72	1: 27	128
14: 23-25	78	11: 2-4	65	2: 14-26	53
Luke :		12: 4, 5	195	1 Peter :	
5: 39	101	16: 1, 2	130	2: 4-6	183
9: 23	94	1 Corinthians :		2: 9, 16	168
9: 49, 50	150	3: 1-4	143	1 John :	
12: 54-57	35	9: 19-23	3	4: 1	104
22: 26	78	10: 16	80	Revelation :	
24: 52, 53	6	10: 17	79, 81	3: 7	174
John :		11: 20-22	79	4: 8	108
3: 16	95	12: 12-26	83	1: 10-27	206

INDEX OF AUTHORS QUOTED

Anonymous,	"Hammer away, ye hostile bands"	106
	"I'm apt to think the man that could surround" . . .	156
	"I will not ask my neighbor of his creed"	151
	"To know, to do, the Head's command"	193
	"Ubi Christus, ibi Ecclesia"	194
Augustine,	"Totus Christus caput et corpus est"	194
Bengel,	"A more admirable thing to wash"	69
Beza,	"Sire, it belongs to the church to be struck, not to strike"	106
Bushnell,	"Out-populating power of the Christian stock" . . .	63
	"We need to keep fixed tim ^e s"	113
Claudius,	"Little flags floating above"	70
Cowley,	"God the first garden made"	202
Cowper,	"God made the country"	202
Elizabeth,	"Who lived and died a maiden queen"	133
Emerson,	"Religion demands no particular actions"	112
Gould,	"Crowns and thorns may perish"	173
Keble,	"There are in this loud, stunning tide"	128
Laurentius,	"These are the church's true treasures"	11
Longfellow,	"Nothing useless is or low"	184
Lowell,	"New occasions teach new duties"	58
Macaulay,	"Even for female agency"	133
Milton,	"Anon they move in perfect phalanx"	49
	"The high embowed roof"	111
Pliny,	"Ante lucem convenire"	120
Shakespeare,	"It is a custom more honored"	70
	"The heavens themselves, the planets"	114
Tennyson,	"Becoming, when the time had birth"	26
	"Our little systems have their day"	105
	"Shall eagles not be eagles"	195
	"The old order changeth, yielding place to new" . .	48
	"The Parliament of Man"	26
	"Think the rustic cackle of your bourg"	152
	"Well I know That unto him who works"	56
Tertullian,	"The oftener we are mown down"	14
Varro,	"Divine Nature gave the fields, human art"	202



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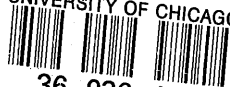
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